PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Saturday, July 7, 2007 | 44 | 18 sections | Vol. 22 | No. 291 | P18

Condom maker offers best job Down Under

Dante Ang: I did not do it but Erap print ads good

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BOSSE IN CAPTIVITY:

The first photos of Fr. Giancarlo Bossi since he was abducted June 10 were sent to his best friend, Claretian priest Angel Calvo, in Zamboanga City on a cell phone via MMS on Thursday. Calvo believes the photos were taken recently. Authorities also believe the photos are authentic. Another photo on Page A2.

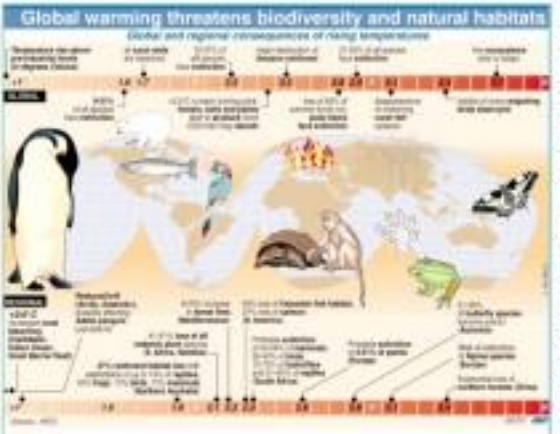
THE HILLS ARE ALIVE. Hot lately, going by this view from a mountaintop in Taytay, Rizal. Between layers of greenery and the Metro Manila skyline are hazardous condos remaining out of a cement factory in Antipolo and an all-engulfing smog shrouding the cityscape.

PCGG loses ₱220-M case

Bedol did not include 38 ERs in his canvass

By Nikko Dizon

Global warming threatens biodiversity and natural habitats



Proclaim us, party-list reps urge Comelec

By Nikko Dizon

'Perfect witness' for rebuttal not presented, says court

By Vitt Gutierrez

LIVE EARTH CONCERTS

Coolest gig: Antarctica band joins rock royalty

NBI arrests exec in Internet scam; other suspects named

By Tina G. Santos and Michaela V. Reyna

PNP: Burgos witnesses also disappeared

By Alcuin Papa and Maryjoe C. Ortiz

Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

Abu tagged in Bossi kidnap

No quick fix to problem, says new defense chief

By Lira Dalangin-Fernandez
INQUIRER.net

MORE THAN A MONTH after the abduction of Father Giancarlo Bossi, Malacañang has tagged the extremist Abu Sayyaf as the group holding the Italian priest and admitted that there is "no quick fix to the problem."

Acting Defense Secretary and concurrent National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales said he told visiting Italian Ambassador Gherardo Gentini, sent to Manila by his government to help facilitate Bossi's release, that the Philippine government was exerting all efforts for the safe recovery of the priest.

"But I have emphasized that we are dealing with the Abu Sayyaf and, given our experience with them, it will really take a long time [to resolve the Bossi case]," Gonzales told Inquirer in a phone interview.

"There's no quick fix to this problem, especially if we are trying to make sure Bossi is released safely," he added.

Gonzales met with Gentini in Malacañang Friday noon before the Italian Cardinal's meeting with Archbishop Mandagi Arnoldo Ferrer, Clarentian Superior Eduardo Ferrer. (See related story on Page A111)

Asked about Gentini's response, Gonzales said she "understands the situation."

He said Gentini was also "satisfied" with what the government, especially members of the Armed Forces who are searching for the priest in Mindanao, was doing. He also told Gentini publication never undercuts efforts to secure "proof of life" from the 57 area-old clergyman's abductors.

Initially, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which signed a ceasefire with the government, had been helping in the effort to locate Bossi.

But the group has since pulled out its forces from the area, leaving the job entirely to the government.

Ruiter flew to Cambodia on Friday to visit the military's Southern Command and get more details of the rescue operations, Gonzales said.

Bossi was kidnapped in Payao, Zamboanga del Sur province, last June 10—while on his way to celebrate Mass. He is the parish priest of the town.

Ruiterra, a member of the Italian parliament and former minister of trade for foreign affairs, arrived in the country Thursday to meet with authorities and discuss efforts to have Bossi released safely.

Ruiterra also met with Armed Forces chief General Hermogenes Esperon, who told her yesterday that more than a thousand soldiers and 200 policemen were taking part in the search for Bossi in Mindanao, according to military spokesperson Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro.

"The number of troops that have been poured in there is sufficient to pursue the rescue operations," Bacarro said, adding that Esperon had also expressed to Ruiterra her appreciation of the government's efforts.

With a report from AFP

CAPTIVE PRIEST Giancarlo Bossi appears to be holding a radio in the jungle in this photo uploaded to Christian priest Angun Lakas of Zamboanga City on a cell phone via MMS on Thursday. Authorities believe the shot is authentic and was used by his kidnappers.

Solons doubt House savings

THREE CONGRESSMEN LED BY Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. that the House of Representatives saved money under him in the past three years, including P60 million in 2004.

"De Venecia's office has a dual lack of funds to have shown funding requests by congressmen in the past. So, how can he say now that the House had managed to save money during the same period?" Iloilo said in a press statement.

The House congressman Justice Panes, with the same statement, adding that congressmen had repeatedly complained of being deprived access to House funds during the CJDC Congress.

Panes said a committee effort by De Venecia to withhold funds had forced congressmen to dip into their own pockets to award from their respective districts to the House of Representatives in Quezon City.

Tabrio, Panes said, it was only now that De Venecia caused the release of funds and other benefits to enticed congressmen, including P1 million to every congressman.

Iloilo said the monies has to be reappropriated because the belated release of House benefits, if validated, may be seen as an effort by De Venecia to buy support for his speakership bid. De Venecia is seeking to retain the speakership against the challenge of Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia.

Rep. Carlos Padilla said De Venecia's claim that the House had saved money under him was intended to enhance the true financial status of the House. He said that if the House from 2004 to 2006 was awash in savings as claimed by De Venecia, then the congressmen would have got no funding for their projects and trends in aid of legislative research.

Speakership race 'all over but the shouting'

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE RACE FOR THE POST OF HOUSE SPEAKER is all over but for the shouting," according to Muntinlupa Rep. Rozzano Rufino B. Biazon, a diehard yesterday that Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia had already won the contest hands down.

Gonzales said his confidence stemmed from the fact that De Venecia's challengers, Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia, should have been able to demonstrate at this time, or two weeks before the opening of the 14th Congress, that he had the numbers to win the position.

He list, Garcia had not been able to do so, Gonzales said in a phone interview. By his own count, he added, there were fewer than 80 congressmen supporting the Cebu lawmaker's bid to be the speaker.

"With two weeks to go before the opening of Congress and you still don't have the numbers, then there's a problem," said Gonzales, a staunch ally of De Venecia.

He also shrugged off talk that De Venecia agree to the proposal that the House choose its next leader through secret balloting.

No secret balloting

Gonzales said that there was no need to bring in a secret balloting in the House. Either one had the numbers to win or he had not, he explained.

He said those calling for a secret balloting were those who did not have the numbers to begin with.

Gonzales said that the challenge De Venecia faced in the new Congress was "how to reclaim some parliamentary country" with the Senate as well as among members of the House.

Gonzales said relations between the Senate and the House had soured during the past two Congress, with congressmen even calling for the abolition of the Upper House.

There was even more reason for the House to restore good relations with the Senate, now that it was dominated by senators affiliated with the opposition, Gonzales said.

As for members of the House, he said that restoring civility among themselves was also important. He noted that in the last Congress, congressmen were openly bickering on the floor, even shouting at each other.

"If you are not able to recover in at least primary terms our parliamentary country will the House and among members of the House, it would be difficult to shepherd the passage of bills," he said.

Gonzales admitted that he wanted to become the majority leader of the chamber but wouldn't mind settling for the post of minority (deputy majority) leader.

Inside track

Gonzales said he was taking this position because he was a "believer" in the principle of continuity. In his mind, he said, Iloilo Rep. Arthur Defensor, the incumbent senior deputy majority leader and who was on his last term, had an "inside track" into the majority leader position.

On Thursday, De Venecia said that should he be elected anew as the leader of the House, he would retain Defensor in his post. (See story on Page A4 for more details.)

For his part, Bataan City Rep. Marietta Panotowda yesterday said the winner in the Speakership race should demonstrate a strong political will to crush the whip on anomalous congressmen and the political turncoats in the last Congress on the floor for reforms.

Panotowda said the opening of the 14th Congress offered a fresh beginning to the House and should signal that an insistence reforms and internal discipline among its members would become the norm.

Parole officer backs Atong Ang bid

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE PROMOTION AND PAROLE OFFICER of Charlie "Atong" Ang has no objections to his request at the Sandiganbayan for a 20-day vacation in the US.

Giving humanitarian reasons, Cirse Inocencio, chief probation and parole officer yesterday joined Ang in asking the anti-graft court's Special Division to allow the latter to visit his family in Las Vegas, Nevada, where he last saw in November 2006.

Ang was placed under a two-year probation after pleading guilty to a lesser offense in the six-year-old plunder case filed against ex-President Joseph Estrada. He was extradited to the Philippines on orders of a Nevada court in November last year.

In asking the court to allow him to visit his family, he also said that the hotel trip would allow him to settle financial obligations he incurred since he was released from the North Las Vegas jail in 2002.

Moreover, Ang has changed his schedule of departures. Instead of leaving on July 11, he has now it is July 20, Inocencio said in a comment filed with the Special Division Tuesday.

"This office interposes no objection to the travel for humanitarian reasons. It is hoped that probationer be permitted to travel to the US for a period of 20 days more or less," the officer stated.

Earlier, the prosecution filed its manifestation in the antigraft court, raising no objection to his trip to Nevada.

While a prosecutor that granting leave to grant may leave room for violation of probation conditions, the prosecution only asked the court to deduct the period of his travel from his probation period should it allow Inocencio former gambling buddy to fly to the US.

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PNP: Burgos witnesses also disappeared

A newspaper A1

the case

But Director Geary Barias of the PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management said that as far as he knows, two of the witnesses had resigned but that there was still one witness available to the PNP.

Confirmation

Jonas' mother Editha Burgos yesterday said the Inquirer report confirmed what his family had known all along.

"People have already told us about the details that appeared in the Inquirer report about the involvement of the Scalp in my son's abduction," said the widow of late press freedom icon Joe Burgos.

They said the sketches bore an uncanny resemblance to the artists' sketches of the abductors of five supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada in Quezon City last year.

"The people who gave us the artists' sketches of the 'Scap 5' abductors had told us to check the resemblance," Jr said.

The "Scap 5"—Reydie Evangelista, Rodel Dionisio, Jay Lacson-Colmenares, Dennis Flores and PO3 Jose Julio Custodio—were forcibly taken from Bonanza's house in Kamuning, Quezon City, in May 2000 by military and police intelligence agents in plainclothes who did not identify themselves.

Prior to confirming the arrest of the five, a military spokesperson denied that Scalp was looking for "missing" men.

Col. Tristan Kison, then AFP public information chief, later admitted that the government operated two secret units of the Dionisio, whom he alleged to be an intelligence officer of the so-called Special Operations Group of the communist New People's Army.

The four others happened to be with Dionisio at the time, "in our operations' thought of bringing them along," he said.

Carnivorous

Editha said she was surprised and pleased at the decision of the Inquirer source to speak out about his knowledge regarding Jonas' abduction.

"I really believe that there are still good people who listen to their conscience," she said.

But she said she was saddened by the intelligence agent's statement that Jonas could be dead.

"As a mother, I want to believe that my son is still right," she said, adding without elaborating that there were still clues that Jonas was alive.

"My son's wife, who is now studying in a Visayas province with their baby daughter, is really devastated," Editha said.

She said her grandchild had been crying a lot because the child was used to Jonas putting her to sleep at night.

Coverup

Editha also said she was not shocked at the Inquirer report because she knows about the supposed cook names of the abductors even before the report was published.

"Only the name 'Tango' Lims was unsure to me," she said.

Editha said she also was not surprised at AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon's declaration that the family would see the classified report on Jonas' disappearance.

"This only bolsters my belief that there really is coverup," she said.

She also said she did not believe that Jonas was the recipient of vital military information and was abducted because of that knowledge.

"I am not saying that my son is a saint, but if they think that he has committed any offense against the government, they should have filed the proper charges against him in court," Editha said.

She added that she and her family were studying the charges to be filed next week against those they believed to be involved in Jonas' abduction.

Scalp inquiry

Military officials insisted that the Scalp had nothing to do with Jonas' disappearance, saying that was learned by the finding of an internal investigation conducted in May.

According to AFP information chief Lt. Col. Buenaventura Bacarro, Scalp chief Brig. Gen. Jacinto Ligot Jr. and Col. Felimon Tuday might answer the hearings. Section that was conducted to find out "if any unit or body was involved in the abduction of Jonas Burgos."

Bacarro quoted Ligot as "very, very confident" stating that the investigation showed there was no unit or individuals from Scalp who had anything to do with the abduction.

"He said, 'My conscience is clear. The organization had nothing to do with the abduction of Jonas Burgos,'" Bacarro said.

Bacarro recalled that Ligot met with Editha Burgos on May 9 and assured her his unit had nothing to do with Jonas' disappearance.

Asked whether this meant the AFP was dismissing the claim made by the intelligence agent in the Inquirer report, Bacarro said: "That's why we have framed a challenge. That's why we have been challenging them to come out, and if they have substantive evidence to implicate anybody from the Scalp, to file [charges] before an appropriate court."

Calls for Scalp chief to quit

He said that should there be anyone from the Scalp who is charged, the military would notify the press members to investigate.

But the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) called for Ligot's resignation and as "important and incriminating" the military's possible involvement in Jonas' disappearance.

"The allegations made in the document [in the Inquirer report] are very serious and again reaffirm the belief that the military is behind the abduction of Burgos. We are appalled that Malacañang is betraying its sworn duty of the abductors, it has continuously denied involvement. We are calling on Commander in Chief Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to review Ligot's case in the way for a thorough and independent investigation," Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes said in a statement. White report from Christine D. Avendaño

EDITH Burgos compares artist sketch of two alleged suspects (at left) behind the disappearance of her son Jonas with that of suspects in the arrest and detention of five activists who came to be known as the Scap 5 or those were supporters of former President Estrada. DOVICO

Condom maker offers best job Down Under

A newspaper A1

Trojan™ ride as advertisement launched by Durex shows his name is the price of a Durex (young woman to reverse big nurse's earth.

"With this job you get CEO security will be a chance to brag to your mates about the special skills you possess, not to mention that your next role will result in success with the opposite sex," Durex Marketing Manager Sian Pfister told local media.

The "hard-working" position is unpaid, but 200 selected women would be up for free pack of Durex products, plus a bonus prize of $$10,000 ($8044 for one lucky winner, White said.

Only Aussies need apply

In return, nurses would have to report back on the feel and performance of the company's products.

Only Australians need apply and would-be nurses will be asked to explain why they should be considered. Hopes would help in the application, Durex said.

"To apply, simply explain why you think you're right for the position (controversy is acceptable) and you could be eligible for the exclusive house of $$1,000," said the advertorial's researchers concern.

Honest feedback

Durex said it expected those, much of applicants for the unpaid jobs of smoking nurses.

How they list the condoms is not specified, but testers must provide honest feedback about how they feel for the consumer.

So deadline is set for evaluating a range of four condoms and other sex products. Reuters/AP

LIVE FROM CHINA: Workers rush to finish construction of the frame for speakers and video screens for the Live Earth concert today at the new business district of Shanghai. The concert takes place simultaneously on seven continents and is designed to raise awareness about climate change. AFP/AFP

LIVE FROM LATIN AMERICA: The stage along Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro is already for the Live Earth concert after a court overturned an earlier decision to cancel the show due to concerns over crowd safety. The Copacabana would have left out Latin America's four-the worldwide music fest. AP

Judge rules Live Earth show in Copacabana Beach can go ahead

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL—A Brazilian judge decided Thursday that South America's Live Earth concert could go ahead as planned after organizers convinced her there would be adequate security at the Copacabana Beach festival.

The office of the prosecutor who had sought to cancel the concert confirmed Judge Maria Cristina Barza Brandão's decision to reject a request by prosecutor Denise Faria Bento Rosado to suspend court sessions, judges' decisions can be repeatedly reversed, often within hours.

Chances for the gig featuring Jimmy Rowles, Rhett Grey and Pharrell Williams got a boost from police who said they would guarantee security for the show expected to draw 750,000 people.

But a four-hour-day show was cancelled this week after Gallucci opened talk Turin who argued police would not be able to provide concert security because they are involved then with the upcoming Pan American Games and a huge crackdown on shantytown gangs.

Organizers appealed to Gallucci after authorities reversed course and said police were now available because the open-air project must show scheduled for the same time was switched to a site where fewer officers will be needed.

Turin was not inspired to shift focus away from concert by the feeling drums on Copacabana that drew 2 million people.

She said at the time that Gallucci's plan is not appropriate for huge concerns because the setting makes it difficult for police to stall "the slightest visible security plan."

The Plan went a the only free concert for Live Earth, founded by Kevin Wall, an Emmy-winning concert producer. Proceeds from the allies' concerts will go toward the Alliance for Climate Protection, a coalition of nonprofit charities led by former US Vice President Al Gore. AP

Coolest gig: Antarctica band joins rock royalty

Homepage A1

day drop in temperature—it is minus 10 degrees (Celsius) outside," Marc Bolasny, lead singer of the band, told Reuters by telephone from Antarctica.

"You've just got to be very quick getting to the songs done."

The 22-year-old engineer said he and his fellow musicians had been rehearsing in the last few days and would record the performance on Thursday or Friday in time for Saturday's event.

"It's quite daunting in a way but on the other hand we don't have TV and that much media really," he said.

Heightened awareness

"What we are is through the Internet. It's hard to understand how much hype is going on. When we play there are 17 people on the base, and it gets a lot of fun really and hard to get the biggest picture."

Organizers hope the series of concerts across the world will attract a global audience of up to two billion people, raise awareness about climate change and encourage people to alter their lifestyles to help the environment.

Bolasny said it was as near-clean to his heart.

Gore's promise

"I was very passionate about it when I came down here to work," he explained. "People have to start to understand it more quickly we can put measures in place to prevent it."

Rotterdam's performance remains short of Gore, who has met US vice president opposing Live Earth, can do to act on his promise to hold at least one gig in every continent.

Under threat

The concerts are to be held in Sydney, Tokyo, Shanghai, London, Hamburg, Johannesburg and New York. A concert in Rio de Janeiro is under threat due to security concerns. (Story above.)

The British Antarctic Survey says temperatures at the southern part of the Antarctic Peninsula have risen by nearly 3 degrees Celsius during the last 50 years, second faster the global average and matched only by Alaska and Siberia. Reuters

RICE STRATEGY: National Food Authority administrator Jessup P. Montero (2nd from right) discusses with officers and members of the Alyansa ng Isdiwang Bigas Inc. (Aniban) the agency's rice distribution strategies for the coming lean months of July to September during the Aniban's first national board meeting recently. Montero, guest speaker of the meeting, called on the Aniban led by its national president Robert Hernandez (3rd from right) to support the agency in the proper distribution of government rice to consumers. Aniban is composed of over 11,300 licensed rice retailers and grain businessmen.

Appeals court chides ex-solon for contempt

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS REPRIMANDED the father of two slain brothers for claiming that its justices had been "bought" and would acquit a former congressman convicted for the double murder.

The appellate court's Sixth Division cited for contempt Ricardo Quintos, whose sons Rodante Mikhael, were killed in 1997 in Davao del Sur.

Former Rep. Jose Villarosa, together with six others, were convicted for the double murder in March 31, 2006.

Villarosa has since appealed his conviction.

In May this year, Quintos filed a motion asking the justices of the Seventh Division to inhibit themselves from hearing the appeal, claiming they could not be impartial.

He also claimed that he had received reliable reports that Villarosa had bought the justices and that a decision acquitting the former congressman had been written.

The Seventh Division was then composed of Justices Noel Tijam, Romeo Brawner and Normandie Pizzaro. Tijam and Villaro are now members of the Sixth Division.

In a resolution dated June 26, 2007, the appellate court denied Quintos's motion which it described as irresponsible, reckless, malicious and unfounded.

It also ordered Quintos to behave prudently and warned not to impute false, malicious and unfounded accusations or innuendos against the court.

It also warned the justices that any act to embarrass, malign or subvert its functions would give rise to penalties.

The appellate court said Quintos failed to substantiate his claims in his motion and his elaborate new "accusation."

"For a single piece of evidence has been presented to prove that this Court has been influenced, by appellant Villarosa, is that it has prepared or is preparing a decision in Villarosa's favor for consideration," it said.

Quintos' motion to inhibit was also an attempt to "coerce and influence" the court to rule in his favor, it added.

The court also said granting the motion to inhibit would send the wrong signal that to unsatisfied party could just dislodge a judge from a case by filing such a motion even without proof. It would also encourage people to keep transferring their case from one division to another if the third they would get an unfavorable ruling, it added.

Prosecutor convicted of bribery

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE SANDIGANBAYAN YESTERDAY CONvicted the then assistant prosecutor of Manila for accepting a P5,000 bribe and sentenced him to 12 years in jail.

The anti-graft court's fifth Division found Commissioner Velasco guilty of violating the antigraft law and of indirect bribery for demanding and receiving money in exchange for a favorable action on a criminal complaint by prosecutor-turned-judge.

Court records showed that Velasco was tasked to conduct a preliminary investigation of the complaint filed by a certain Ms. Lourdes Salvador B. Bonito against her neighbors, Eduardo and Clarissa Magbitang, in July 2000.

The following month, the Magbitangs counter-filed with Bonito's office a petition to dismiss the said defamation complaint. Bonito was related to the co-accusers on the said petition.

When Bonito went to the assistant fiscal's office to file her counter-affidavit, Velasco allegedly handed her a piece of paper in which he had written the amount of P5,000.

The complainant asked him if it was the penalty she had incurred for the complaint she filed but Velasco allegedly told her that it was for him and to be could elevate her complaint to the court.

Velasco was caught red-handed in an entrapment operation conducted by the Philippine Bureau of Investigation on Nov. 8, 2001 at a Chinese restaurant in Quiapo, Manila, where he and Bonito agreed to meet for the money—the P5,000 bills earlier marked by the police.

The BI investigation disclosed that he was positive for fluorescent powder, records showed.

In his defense, Velasco claimed that the whole incident was a set-up. He alleged that the money was Bonito's payment for the cell phone the latter bought from him minutes before he was arrested.

However, the antigraft court found his excuses "very unnatural, unusual and wanting in any possible motive and therefore, improbable and unworthy of credit."

The court further stated that Velasco's acts, which were done in bad faith and caused "undue injury" or actual damage to Bonito, constituted a violation of the latter's law.

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Lawyer not quite upbeat on Erap fate

By Lala R. Sabarreta

LAWYER ESTELITO MENDOZA yesterday said Joseph Estrada and his co-accused may get a disadvantage given the current situation of the justices of the Sandiganbayan's special division.

But Mendoza, a legal counsel of Estrada, said he would be "reasonably disappointed" if named President would be announced because he was confident about his arguments.

He also said the justices had "a heavy burden" because of the fact that they were appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo. But he added that he had "full confidence" in the court.

According to Mendoza, Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francisco de Castro was named head of the anti-graft court by Mrs Arroyo although there is seniority in the Supreme Court, Mendoza said.

"The success and the objective of the administration of justice is only attained when happens on the people that it is fair and just. Now in this case, the justices who compose the division have a very heavy burden," Mendoza told reporters.

"It is a heavy burden because it is the burden of the court by their decisions to demonstrate and show that the decision was rendered solely on the basis of facts and the law—nothing more, nothing less," he said.

MENDOZA: Justices have a heavy burden but I have full confidence in the court.

Long process

Mendoza said another factor complicating the situation was the fact that in the past, judges were promoted after convicting the accused of high-profile cases.

He said, however, that he was not saying these judges were unqualified to serve at their new posts.

The "long and delayed" process before a trial is concluded is also another factor working against the accused, Mendoza said. Judicial proceedings have shown that if they acquit the long-detained accused, people will think that the accused has been a victim of injustice, he said.

Asked if he thought the observation he mentioned would work against his client, Mendoza said: "But number five mentioned has put all accused at a disadvantage, not just President Estrada."

He added: "So there is this apprehension. I think it is not well-founded but you cannot remove it, and it will affect the appreciation of justice."

"I think Justice de Castro has already denied this, but the might be questioned by his desire for promotion to the Supreme Court. This is unfortunate because Justice de Castro is very well qualified. This is an unfortunate circumstance, don't it sometimes seems."

Wrong signal

A civil organization calling itself Tanglaw ng Bayan urged Mrs Arroyo to drop any plan to grant executive clemency to Estrada in the event of conviction.

The Tanglaw spokesperson, Prof. Bryan Sueno Jr., said the Palace announcement that the President was open to pardoning Estrada was "sending a wrong signal" and "overturning a tyranny of the justice system in the country."

Sueno also derided former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, who had called for the ousted President's release.

"It is saying that Estrada has found new light. Well, in his case he is leading the nation to darkness," Sueno said in a statement.

Sueno warned that airing the planned pardon this early could "create impression that a deal is going between Malacañang Palace and the Estrada group."

He appealed to the President "to let justice take its normal course," adding:

"We urge that President to show that in this country, when a person is guilty, he pays for his crimes."

According to Sueno, Tanglaw "respects the power of the deposed President and acknowledges the acquisition of other quarters for a chance to the issue and the call for unity."

Ignorance

"We must say, however, pay a price or condition to that application, especially if the rap price would be a questionable precedent," he said.

Sen. Joker Arroyo weighed in on the Estrada issue, saying the deposed President had received ignorant of controversial issues despite his long experience in government.

Arroyo made the statement in reaction to Estrada's claim that there was no evidence on the Jinggoy Estrada" Bolante and "Mike Gorio" Velarde case against those who were then aide of the incumbent cabinet members, sat on them cases.

"President Estrada cannot quite get it. Despite his five years as senator, six years as Vice President, and almost three years as President, he has not learned to ask before he speaks—a most unnecessary thing," Arroyo said.

Arroyo said that had Estrada hesitated to ask from the Senate, he would have been informed that the investigation of the Bolante, a former agriculture undersecretary involved in a fertilizer scam, was principally conducted by then Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., chair of the Senate agriculture committee.

Arroyo said that as blue ribbon committee chair, he was merely asked by the Magsaysay committee to help in the drafting of the committee report, which he did.

He said a formal committee report was duly submitted to and approved by the senate in plenary.

"That is why Bolante cannot return to the Philippines. What more does President Estrada want?" Arroyo said.

Bolante is currently in a US prison.

Arroyo said the "Mello Yusi" case involving former Election Commissioner Mojahi Candimas was referred to the defense committee chaired by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon.

He said the blue ribbon committee had no participation in that investigation.

Barking up wrong tree

"Whatever there was, dismiss or not should have been addressed to the assessment of the defense committee. It is as simple as that. Erap looks ridiculous, barking up the wrong tree, so to speak, he even deprived of [given one]," Arroyo said, adding:

"I would have preferred to keep quite on this since I presumed President Estrada in the impeachment trial in 2000, I have not said a word on the subject. I have not said a word on the subject in his phrases cited. I wish him well if he is acquitted. But he has no license to say with complete abandon, falsehoods on matters that are verifiably false," With reports from Cynthia D. Balana

Dante Ang: I did not do it but Erap print ads good

From page A1

lascivious, to neutral," Ang, a former adviser of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said in a phone interview.

Materializing, though Ang, is suspected of being responsible for the ad that appealed to the public to respect the decision of the Sandiganbayan on the bail of President Joseph Estrada's guilt or innocence with respect to the plunder charge lodged against him.

"I have nothing to do with it. Being a member of the advertising industry, I have many friends in the business, including Shoal," Ang said in reference to the ad agency that placed the full-page ads in major broadsheets, including the business-class tabloid.

A Shoal staffer confirmed that the agency placed the ads in behalf of the group "Friends for Democracy" the tribunal to identify the members of the group, citing a confidentiality agreement with clients.

Freedom of expression

Ang said that as far as he was concerned, the ad was just an exercise in freedom of expression.

"What's wrong with the following: 'You don't need a modern education to tell you that the Estrada presidency will hand down its decisions in 90 days after all sides have treated their case. It's been a month's time, and the decision is requested from one more," he said.

On the ad's statement, Ang said any sober reader would know that it did not say whether Estrada was guilty or innocent: "It just says, Let us respect the decision. We know that any decision will inflame the passions of either—and both sides. I'd not guilty I'm pro-Estrada [if guilty]."

But Belinda said on Thursday: "It appears that my case will prolong way of a resolution.[They are already conditioning the minds of the people for such an event.

"I counted the ads and added up the total [cost], it will easily reach more than P1 million. Ano 'Pare, Dick and Harry can't just come up with that amount. It's Malacañang that is behind the ad."

Dangerous situation

Presidential adviser on legal affairs Gabriel Claudio said Belinda was creating a "dangerous situation by accusing Mr Arroyo of pressuring the sandiganbayan court to issue a guilty verdict.

"Speculations aired in public about the outcome of the Erap case can unfairly affect the credibility of the Sandiganbayan's verdict ,whether we agree it's just media speculations and forecasts, including false accusations about the Palace trying to influence the court decisions, are both unfair and dangerous," Claudio said in a statement Thursday.

He noted the Estrada claim that the President had told Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and Bishop Broderick Pabillo that he will not influence the court decision.

"It is therefore reinforcement of adversely unless the verdict comes out, it is important for the public to accept such verdict with credibility and respect. Speculating and second guessing can only cause undue tension and agitation. They should be stopped," Claudio said.

He also said that unlike Estrada, the Palace had exercised every restraint to express any prejudice or preference regarding the outcome of the case.

"But I have denied and against false accusations of interference or pointing pressure to the court. It is in the interest of harmony and peace that the government has kept its distance from judicial processes to ensure that the court's verdict will be handed down with legal thoroughness, independence, transparency and equity," Claudio said.

Denials

On Thursday, Cardinal Vidal denied that the President had spoken about Estrada's supposed conviction.

Mike Robles, administrator of the Light Rail Transit Authority and a spokesperson for Mike Velarde, yesterday also said as much.

Robles said Velarde had been calling for benevolence from most of friends while his plunder case was being tried.

"It's no open secret that Brother Mike has always advocated for temporary liberty for Erap, whether on bail or recognizance, pending the resolution of his case. And every time he expresses

ESTRADA: Corpus executive clemency. Why should I accept clemency. I did nothing wrong.

ANG: I don't see anything wrong.

this position to the President, she would almost say that it is for the courts to decide," Robles told the Inquirer.

He said he was present when these discussions took place between Mr Arroyo and Velarde several times.

Mr Arroyo, a spiritual adviser of Mr Arroyo, is in the United States to attend an El Shaddai rally in Los Angeles and to undergo his annual medical checkup in San Francisco, according to Robles.

No clemency

In a phone interview on Thursday, Estrada told the Inquirer he was certain that Malacañang had successfully pressured the Sandiganbayan to convict him of plunder.

But he said he continued to pray that the court would do like and decide his fate "based on the rule of law, not on politics."

Estrada said that in the event of a guilty verdict, he would consult his lawyers for an appeal but would reject outright executive clemency from Mrs Arroyo.

"Why should I accept clemency? I did nothing wrong," he said by phone from his detention quarters at his vacation estate in Tanay, Rizal.

The issue of clemency by Estrada has reportedly erupted up whenever attempts at reconciliation between the camps of the ousted leader and his Arroyo made the news.

His facing 74-year-old godfather Estrada for executive clemency.

"I'm not really hoping but I'm also praying that the justices of the Sandiganbayan will decide the case based on justice and the rule of law, not on politics," Estrada said.

He also said he recognized the supposed vulnerability of the justices to pressure, but he was hopeful that one of the justices want to make the crossover to the Supreme Court. The other one, I believe, is eyeing a promotion," Which appears from Julius Jurado, Jaya Dasco, Jerry Esplanada, Ras dhdave and Cynthia D. Balana

Kiko: Shut up

SEN. FRANCIS PANGILINAN (PI) today called on administration officials to stop talking about the Sandiganbayan verdict on Erap. He's also sure that they be accused of trying to influence the decision.

"The worst public statements on the Erap case coming from administration officials do not do the cases any good," Pangilinan said.

"They create the image that Malacañang is trying to influence the court. The statements made undermine the independence of the Sandiganbayan," he said, adding that Malacañang should maintain silence even in the face of questions from the media.

Sen. Blas Ople Gaysmin said he believed that the administration has failed to show Estrada was guilty as charged.

He claimed also that it was the defense, and not the prosecution, which presented the controversial second envelope that supposedly contained Estrada's bank transactions during the latter's impeachment trial.

Gaysmin also expressed doubt that the administration was sincerely for genuine reconciliation.

"The President keeps saying, 'Let's have peace, focus on work and move on,' but the administration is also very persistent [in] the [idea] that it's the administration that is creating political turmoil," he said.

Sen. Benigno Aquino III said the test of guilt beyond reasonable doubt was incoherent.

"A central accusation is former Bataan governor Leonardo Roman's claim regarding Estrada's having benefited from the tobacco excise tax. This was not proven in the impeachment. The amount of money claimed could not be found inside the bags," Aquino pointed out.

PCGG loses ₱220M in Marcos bank deposits

From page A1

Bernardino, or "any other witness at this time can ... to rebut the testimonies and the judicial affidavits of [PCGG] witnesses."

Thirdly is issue all along that it was Bernardino who knew the entire background about the questioned transactions or telexes. Having failed to present Bernardino in the course of IRTC, he could have been the perfect witness to disprove the claims of defendant's witnesses," the court noted.

The court further ruled that the petitioner's testimony may have been "sufficiently supported by the plaintiff."

"The plaintiff had all the opportunity to present him as its initial but opted not to do so," the court added.

'Forged signatures'

The PCGG-led audit team had found the P220 million to be fictitious since the transactions were made through "spurious telexes" containing "forged signatures."

The bank deposits were "fictitious transactions" which were sanctioned by the PCGG-led audit team to insist that it "never actually received that amount."

The latest ruling by the anti-graft court's Fifth Division dealt another blow to the PCGG, the agency tasked with recovering the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies.

Early this month, the PCGG lost a graft case filed against former officials of the Development Bank of the Philippines in connection with a nearly P150-million loan that the DBP extended to a company of the late Marcos crony Roberto S. Benedicto for a soybean processing project.

Marcos deposits

In the 1997 agreement, the antigraft court noted that the MIC "acknowledged" that it was these holding deposits of the Marcoses and their cronies totaling around P981.4 million. The bank also "undertook to pay" the entire amount in the PCGG in cents, to amend installments.

But in 1997, the PCGG sued the MIC at the Sandiganbayan after the bank began installing back the release of the remaining balance of P981.4 million.

The antigraft court finally rendered a judgment in the 1997 civil case by convening a special division of five justices, who then voted 3-2 in favor of dismissing the PCGG's complaint for lack of evidence. The ruling was promulgated on October 29.

3-2 ruling

Those who voted for the dismissal were Associate Justices Edgardo Cruz (who ponened the decision), Teresita Leo Bautista, and Ismael Mariñas. Associate Justices Bla. Corazon Cuevas-Estrada and Soledad Salvador dissented.

During the trial, the bank argued that documents relating to the existence of the P220 million as of 1986 turned out to be containing of "spurious telexes" containing "forged signatures" and other features which did not comply with the bank's standard practices.

The PCGG, however, argued the legal of the records of the controversial audit examinations conducted on the bank, which were both led by a PCGG representative.

Bogus transactions

The supposedly bogus transactions usually involved multimillion dollar remittances to the IRTC from different foreign banks, namely Morgan Guaranty Trust Bank, Wells Fargo San Francisco, Bankers Trust NY and Bank of America San Francisco.

The court recalled in the ruling, "Being fictitious, the audit team recommended that the amount of US$1.3 billion or P220.95 million be deducted from the IRTC's principal obligation to the PCGG."

The bank's defense was largely hinged on the testimony given by accountant Bernard Kalinski, then a financial analyst of the Credit Information Bureau Inc., which is a member of the PCGG-led auditing team.

Among other defense witnesses, Gallardo explained to the court that the P220 million "should not be in part" of the total amount IRTC owed to the PCGG under the 1997 agreement.

"We find that the defense witnesses are credible and have delivered credible testimonies on the matter of spurious transactions," the court said.

The plaintiff PCGG, it said, failed to "adduce the documentary evidence" against it" pertaining to the spurious transactions.

A "VICTIM" cries for help and other "casualties" are scattered on the runway while an aircraft (left) burns in yesterday's emergency drill at the Mimy Aquino International Airport.

Rescue drill turns real

By Tarra Quismundo

IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A DRILL IN emergency preparedness.

An aircraft in distress plows into disaster, killing dozens of passengers and residents and injuring many more. Rescue workers then rush to the scene to save more lives.

But the Crash and Rescue Exercise (CRX) in Paranaque turned real yesterday when one of the "rescue choppers" caught fire toward the end of the drill, sending fireworks soaring to the helicopter to help put out the fire.

"The engine logged down," said the pilot, Navy Lt. Gene Jimeda in a brief interview.

The Philippine Navy chopper, a BO-105, caught a small fire in its main rotor as it landed at the drill area at the Aurora Business Park around 11 a.m. yesterday. It was on its third "casualty pick-up" and had just dropped off two batches of "casualties" at the Makati Medical Center when the incident happened.

Two pilots and two others were on board the helicopter when the blaze occurred.

Jimeda said a fire extinguisher inside the chopper was used to immediately put out the fire. The minor blaze was put out within minutes, sparing any real casualty in the rescue drill which the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) conducts every two years.

"Anything that happens has a negative and positive effect. In this case, it was good because we can evaluate, is ally how old our equipment are. And we now really know but our scores weren't could respond because you saw how the fireworks soared how even without being ordered to do so," said airport security chief retired Gen. Angel Aranilla.

Besides real military aviation pudows would investigate the incident at the crash site, the simulated chopper was among several aircraft used in the exercise. Besides the Navy, the Philippine Air Force and the Philippine Coast Guard also sent choppers to take part in the drill.

Yesterday's CREX gathered representatives and local emergency response units for one of the biggest rescue drills staged regularly.

Miaa holds the exercise every two years as required by the International Civil Aviation Organization, which shall then assess whether the response time and multi-agency coordination measured up to international standards.

"The capital city of any disaster response organization is complacency and denial... that nothing wrong is going to happen. That's why we're holding drills like this to prevent complacency and denial," said Dr. Anthony Golez, of the National Disaster Coordinating Agency, who observed the drill.

SHARP

The Sharp Space Saver refrigerator

Keep your cosmetics tidy with the practical carry anywhere cosmetic box!

The Sharp Space Saver refrigerator is truly an innovation in organized space. It's the only one that has the practical carry anywhere cosmetic box which detaches at ease from the ref body itself! Providing clutter-free mobility for your make-up! Plus, it's no frost feature chills your cosmetics effectively, making it cool and pleasant upon application.

And to make things even more organized, the Sharp Space Saver ref also has convertible shelves that let you assemble the space inside your ref. There's no more space for excuses in keeping your ref tidy. Now that's a soothing makeover to your kitchen lifestyle.

EVERYTHING'S BETTER IF IT'S SHARP.

Bedol did not include 38 ERs in his canvass

From page A1

cluded in Bedol's canvass.

The ERs were kept locked in chests in a vault but the members of the town's Board of Elections inspectors.

It was a heroic act, according to Lista.

The ERs took more than a month after the elections to be canvassed after one election official of the town, Elias Garcia, went missing. She hasn't been found yet.

Dr. Lista said while the minister of votes that the ERs contained had a "statistical" significance in the case of the contest between Pimentel III and the late Team Unity candidate left standing, Jean Miguel Zubiri, the Pagadian ERs were key to a case filed by Pimentel at the Supreme Court seeking to stop the proclamation of the 12th senator in the senatorial race because it would be based on fraudulent election results.

Dr. Lista said what the authentic Pagadingan ERs did was "highlight the incredibility of the canvassed results for the rest of Maguindanao."

"I think this is one good reason for the NBC (National Board of Canvassers) to reveal the ERs (of Maguindanao)," she said.

ERs from four villages of Pagalungan that showed seven opposition candidates receiving zero votes were canvassed in the provincial level by Bedol.

In consolidation by a board, led by Comelec lawyer Emilio Intas, she registered 206 votes for the same candidates that got zero from Bedol's canvass.

"It defies logic and reason why candidates received votes in these eight barangays of Pagalungan and got zero in the four other barangays in the same town which were canvassed in the provincial level," said Dr. Lista.

"It is not consistent with common experience," she said.

The results of the Pagalungan ERs have not been announced as of 7 p.m. last night.

Among the candidates who received zero votes in the questioned tally but got votes in the 38 Pagalungan ERs were OIC Armaton-elect Benigno "Haroyo" Aquino III, Alim Peter Capotanan, Buddio "Ping" Lucsi, and Antonio Trillanes IV and losing candidates John Osmeña, Nonie Biron, and Willi Carantong.

But George Garcia, lawyer of Zubiri, said the results from the 38 Pagalungan ERs were not proof of fraud.

"What the ER results did, he said, was "strengthen the belief that if there are opposing

PHOBITEL: Disarmed ERs boy carries his iliad with high court.

ZUBIRI: Still hanging in there.

candidates in the town, there could be votes for the opposition."

"It was possible that there were votes in the 21 other Maguindanao towns because there was contestation of forces, that there were hallwerks of the administration," Garcia told reporters.

'Canvassed votes'

Several weeks prior to the election, Maguindanao Gov. Datu Ampatuan promised to give P1 million to each mayor of the province who could deliver a 12-0 result for PI.

In subsequent press releases, the PI described this as "canvassed votes."

Dr. Lista said the unearthing of the 38 Pagalungan ERs was a big help in Pimentel III's case at the Supreme Court.

"We hope to convince the Supreme Court that we really need to correct before the NBC that the first and second provincial CoCs were statistically improbable," Dr. Lista said.

"It's a tapestry, it's incredible that there were no ERs produced in the other municipalities," she said.

Garcia, however, said the continuing opposition allegation of fraud, and the demand to re-examine the ERs in the entire province, could "lead to an unending canvassing of votes."

"It will be a dangerous precedent because no one can overpower other candidates from adding the ERs to be sanctioned," the PI lawyer said.

"The problem of the opposition is they failed to prove these documents (municipal certificates of canvass) were not authentic."

He said instead of stalling the proclamation of the 12th senator, the correct thing for COMELEC to do was file a petition at the Senate Electoral Tribunal should Pimentel III lose to Zubiri.

Witness scared

Allegations of fraud made Maguindanao electoral canvassers retract, but witnesses were too afraid to come out in the open to testify.

Mussi Dimaukilog, schools district supervisor of Maguindanao who helped expose alleged fraud in the province's elections, was shot dead on June 9 in Pikit, North Cotabato, days after instances of vote manufacturing and rigging were reported.

Bedol's statements didn't help Maguindanao rid its image as a center of fraud in the recent elections.

During the national canvassing, Bedol told the NBC that Datal Saluntayan, the opposition's witness who revealed that ERs from several villages in Pagalungan were still unaccounted, was not a SPI from the town.

190 ERs uncanvassed

But sufficient party-list group Bayan Muna showed a certification from Dimaukilog stating that Saluntayan was SPI in Pagalungan.

Saluntayan executed an affidavit repeating that some 190 ERs in Pagalungan were unaccounted.

A group once allied with President Macapagal-Arroyo, the Citizens' Development NGO Network (Code-NGO), joined the GO's demand to discard the Maguindanao results.

"The threats and violence that jeered Maguindanao are real," said the group in a statement.

With a report from Artemio dela

Proclaim us, party-list reps urge ...

From page A1

who joined the appeal aired at a press conference in Manila were Bedanio Marcelino of Abagad, Lonie Genal and Eduardo Valdez of the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives (Apec), and Guillermo Luz of the Kapisanan Nagtaya Sistemb Pantay (Kasp-Pinturo).

All five want their respective party-list groups' nominees in the May 14 midterm elections.

The Party-list Caucus is made up of 12 "progressive and nationalist party-list organizations that have invested in the economic lives of the people," Genal said.

According to Chavez and company, the controversy over the 12th and last winning senatorial seat between Pimentel and Zubiri "underscored the fact that there is no party-list representation yet in the 14th Congress."

They said a partial proclamation would mean the proclamation of the first nominees of the party-list groups that garnered the two million votes needed to the additional seats to which each group would be entitled once all party-list votes had been canvassed.

348,000 votes

Chavez and company said those party-list groups with some 348,000 votes in the May elections should be proclaimed by the Comelec because they had reached the 2-percent threshold with more than 16 million votes canvassed.

But the Comelec's latest official tally as of June 29, Apec had 310,474 votes; Abagad, 422,052; Bayl, 404,348; and Kasp-Pinturo, 360,331.

"The Pangandaw doctrine will only apply to the additional seats," Genal said.

He said it was also clear that if was this formula, devised by then Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, that the Comelec should use, and not the 2-4-6 formula (one seat for each group that has reached 2 percent, 2 seats for 4 percent, and 3 seats for 6 percent).

Chavez and company said that the Supreme Court already had considered the Panganiban formula "a mathematical absurdity," there was no choice but to apply it lest the Supreme Court again slur the Comelec for contempt.

But the Party-list advocates said "the solution" to the controversies raised in the May 14 elections, such as the party-list formula, would be to amend the 1987 Constitution.

Once they are proclaimed, they said, they would propose amendments to the party-list system, including that all party-list seats would be filled up in accordance with what the Constitution provides—that party-list representatives should take 20 percent of all House seats.

Noon of June 30

Cua noted that the first nominees of the party-list groups that had reached the 2-percent threshold "should have started being party-list representatives in the 13th Congress at noon of June 30."

Bedolo said that if the Comelec was concerned over the possible disenfranchisement of 200,000 voters in Maguindanao in connection with the heated battle for the 12th senatorial slot, it should consider that by not proclaiming the party-list winners, it was disenfranchising millions of Filipinos who had voted for party-list groups.

Chavez and company said that while district representatives of the 14th Congress had begun working, party-list representatives had been preterminated from doing their job.

The party-list groups in the past Congress "no longer have a legal personality" with the Comelec's failure to make even a partial proclamation, Marcelino pointed out.

Chavez and company said party-list representatives could not file or refile bills for their sectors, jockey for committee chairmanships, or even take part in the discussions for leaders for the House speakership.

Voting for speakership

"This bloc will constitute some 12 votes in the battle for the speakership, and that's a significant number that can tip the balance," Genal said of the Party-list Caucus.

The manipulated senate will effectively be disenfranchised in the speakership fight if the Comelec does not proclaim the winning party-list groups by July 23, the day the voting for the speakership is scheduled, Chavez and company said.

IN THE KNOW

What's keeping Comelec from proclaiming winners

INCUMBENT ELECTION RESULTS from Pasay, Lanao del Norte and Bago, Cebu are keeping the Commission on Elections from proclaiming party-list representatives, according to Ce Comelec.

According to Republic Act No. 7941, or the Party-list System Act, the Comelec must rally all votes cast for party-list groups nationwide then rank these groups according to the number of votes they received.

Party-list groups that receive at least 2 percent of the total number of votes cast for the party-list elections are considered winners.

The law said the number of seats in the House of Representatives, that winning party-list groups were entitled to, will be determined by how many percent of the total number of votes the winners received.

Panganiban Formula

But early last month, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos changed the rules of the game.

He said the Comelec would start using the so-called Panganiban Formula (a Supreme Court ruling penned by ex-Justice Artemio Panganiban) in determining the number of House seats that each winning party-list group was entitled to.

The Comelec, in previous elections, used a 2-4-6 formula which gave winning party-list groups one seat for every 2 percent of votes. Under this, a winning party-list group with 2 percent of votes (or more) was entitled to one House seat; those with 4 percent, two seats; and those with 6 percent, three seats.

Abalos cited a Supreme Court ruling that described the 2-4-6 Formula as "simplistic."

Under the formula adopted by the Comelec from the high court ruling, a winning party-list group would be entitled to additional seats based on the number of votes received by the party-list group with the most votes.

The Supreme Court ruled in 2001 that a winning party-list group could get will be determined by dividing the number of its votes with the number of votes of the No. 1 party-list group and then multiplying this with the number of seats that the No. 1 party-list group was entitled to.

Complicated? Some party-list groups accused the Comelec of intentionally making it so.

Inquirer Research

NBI arrests exec in Internet scam; other suspects named

From page A1

ration in Baguio City.

Castillo, who by himself has allegedly defrauded investors of about P200 to P300 million, was charged with syndicated estafa at the Department of Justice.

The NBI has launched a manhunt for the other suspects who remain at large. They were identified as Jaime "Jimpol" Pobiquin, of Tarlac City; Michelle Bracken, of Pasig City; Edwin Bicaldo, of Pampanga; Dinh Ibañez, of Baguio City; Garry Espiritu and one alias Jonnex.

Foreign suspects

The NBI said they are also establishing with their counterparts in other countries for the arrest of suspects Roger Smith, a US national, who heads IS Investment in the Asia-Pacific region, and Raymond Tan and Remy Fong, both Singaporean nationals.

Investigators claimed that Castillo was arrested following complaints filed by Frederico Ubalde, Elvis Manuel Ilanga and Philip Hernandez, who all claimed they fell victims to the scam.

The NBI urged other victims of the "Ponzi-scheme" scam to come out and lodge a complaint against the suspects.

Ponzi schemes are a type of illegal pyramid scheme named for Charles Ponzi, who duped thousands of New England residents into investing in a postage stamp speculation scheme back in the 1920s.

The scheme, which lures investors with abnormally high rates of return in just a short period of time, works on the "rob Peter to pay Paul" principle, in which early investors are compensated to pay off earlier investors until the whole scheme collapses.

The new scam lures unsuspecting victims over the Internet using the website http://www.theisinvestments.net and http://stockfinance.com.

Double your money

Prospective investors are asked to invest $1,000 in franchises but will $30,000 to $60,000 in commissions if a person is able to double their money in 12 days.

"This guaranteed rate of return is bigger than those offered by banks," said NBI-CIDB director Raul Lusaka. "This type of investment scheme usually collapses as fast as they are created while investors are left unable to recover their investments."

The victims told the NBI that they were misled through the Internet when they read the advertisement of IS Investments that a $1,000 investment would earn a daily interest of 4.5 percent or $45 which could be accumulated through fourteen to bank transactions.

'E-points'

The IS Investments website also promised that their investments would also earn 30 percent, also called "e-points," if they invite recruit other investors, they added.

The victims said they edited up the number passed on the website. They were subsequently invited to a meeting by Castillo who introduced them to the other "financial advisers."

Each of them invested $1,000 but claimed that they received no receipt or acknowledgement from Castillo.

Of the three, only Obera received a "trading account" at one time, an indication that he was already a registered IS investor in source.

Pilwo Ilanga and Fernandez failed to receive the online confirmations of their registrations, they tried to refund their investments but the suspect allegedly gave them excuses and even declined receiving money from them.

This prompted them to file a complaint with the NBI.

'Dewwilines'

Obera, on the other hand, said he cheated his investment portfolio as IS investment website everyday and was initially happy that he was earning interest daily. However, he failed to encash the interests earned when he went to the bank as these were not reflected in his bank account.

When he confronted Castillo about it, Obera was told that he could only withdraw his interests if he would recruit a minimum of two investors or the "downlines" required or if he would invest an additional $1,000.

Obera said he refused to borrow money from his relatives after he learned him that IS Investment was a pyramiding syndicate after news about the scam were flashed on television.

The victim then sought the help of the NBI which immediately formed a team by an entrapment operation.

Castillo was arrested as soon as the suspect received the marked money from the victim. The suspect is now detained at the NBI jail.

BSP warning

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday warned the public to be careful in choosing where to invest their money.

"Those who market financial investments under the Ponzi scheme are offering fantastic returns, so we are warning the public," he said.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas advised the Anti-Money Laundering Council to include in its watchlist financial transactions that are suspected to fall under the so-called "Ponzi scheme."

Tetangco said the AMLC had been alerted of this investment fraud following reports received by the BSP that people involved in the Ponzi scheme were trying to stretch its reach among potential Filipino victims.

The AMLC is the body tasked to investigate money laundering activities, and does so partly by requiring banks and other financial institutions to report financial transactions involving huge sums of money which are suspected to have come from illegal activities.

Under the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001, which was also the basis for the establishment of the AMLC, any transaction involving a movement of funds of over P500,000 within one banking day should automatically be reported to the AMLC for monitoring.

Blacklist

The BSP chief said any individual invited to make an investment should be cautious if the offer promises returns that are much higher than what conventional investment activities provide.

Earlier the Securities and Exchange Commission made similar warning to the public against fake licensed-based firms allegedly engaged in Ponzi schemes. The SEC said these firms usually invite possible clients to invest in foreign currencies and then disappear once they get the money.

These firms include Forex-Trade.com, Swiss Canada, Universal Forex System, Global Securities and Private Forex Trade Inc.

The SEC said these firms have no permit nor authority to solicit investments and are therefore operating illegally.

The SEC urged the public to report to the SEC any investment offer made by representatives of these firms or other firms suspected to be operating a fraud scheme.

Noli hails SC ruling on seniors' discount

DE CASTRO

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO, principal sponsor and author of the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2000 (RA 9257) during his stint in the Senate, lauded yesterday the Supreme Court decision upholding the 20-percent discount given to senior citizens on their purchases of medicines.

The decision, De Castro said in a press statement, was an affirmation of Senate's concern for the welfare of the senior citizens.

The Supreme Court has dismissed a petition questioning the constitutionality of RA 9257, which gives senior citizens 20 percent discount on their purchases of medicines and payments for certain services.

De Castro had asked Mercury Drug Corp., the leading drugstore chain in the country, to accept credit card payments from the public following complaints from senior citizens that credit cards were not being accepted for purchases by senior citizens claiming the discount. De Castro said Mercury had acceded to the request.

De Castro said that other drug retailers should follow Mercury Drug's lead.

"We should all work for the rights and interest of our senior citizens, in recognition of their valuable contribution to country," he said.

De Castro also said that he would support moves to amend value added tax (VAT) law exempting the exclusive purchases of senior citizens from the 12-percent VAT so they could fully enjoy the benefits of the senior citizen's discount.

Shangri-La waiters affirm Abalos story

By DJ Yap and Julie M. Aurelio

IF BOHOL COMMISSION ON Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Jr. lied to reporters like Zubiaga in the dining Palace in Makati Shangri-La third last weekend, no one at the Cantonese restaurant is telling. By order of management, they said.

But if two of the staff who spoke to the Inquirer despite the order are to be believed, an outburst did take place, and Abalos left the restaurant seconds after pouring the Zubiaga.

Which means Abalos could have been telling the truth.

A food server who was present at the Friday dinner, who's Miguel Zubiri's parents, Vicky and Jose, were celebrating their anniversary, confirmed that Abalos had indeed bristled with the Zubiaga in one of the function rooms they had reserved for the night.

The waiter said Abalos only said "Hi" to the group and left soon after.

It's their affair

He would not give more details like who Abalos' companion was, saying all inquiries into the matter were to be referred to the hotel's communications department, on management orders.

Reached for comment, the hotel's communications director, Joy Planziers, said they were not "privileged to give information about who was here, is who dated here."

"Chairman Abalos has already spoken about it. It cannot come from the hotel. Whatever the guests do, that's their affair. It's best to leave the hotel out of it," she said.

Controversy erupted last week after Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. accused blocks of impropriety of the poll body supposedly using "breaking bread" suits the Zubiaga, as this put the election official disinclined to baseless.

Pimentel's son, Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III, is in a tight race for third with Abalos and of the with Miguel Zubiri, who reportedly wrestled him through the votes from the contested certificates of canvass from Maynilad areas.

At the entrance to the restaurant, which is located outside the restaurant, said he had seen the Zubiris and Abalos enter the restaurant, but that they came separately.

Smaller function room

He did not recall seeing Abalos leave, but he said he heard from the other staff that the official immediately left without having dinner.

"I don't think they ate ingredients because, it would be stupid since it's a public place. To think the winner of the 12th slot has not even been declared," he said.

One of the food servers in the function talked to said the Zubiris had their dinner in one of the private function rooms in the restaurant.

"The biggest function room, which can accommodate 80 people, can be reserved for up to P100,000. More intimate ones that can sit 16 people cost P50,000, one of the restaurant assistants said.

The Zubiris reportedly used the smaller function room.

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JOR

Palace welcomes $30-M US aid

Proposed funding a boost to campaign vs extrajudicial slays–Bunye

By Cl C. Cabuenget Jr.

MALACAÑANG (TEMPO) WELCOMED the $30 million foreign military funding proposed by the US Congress as a major boost to its ongoing efforts to address the issue of politically motivated killings of the country.

"We assure the members of US Congress that the Philippine government acknowledges these concerns and we see this as a sincere desire to help us address the issues," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

The Philippines will get $30 million in appropriations from the $3.2000 Foreign Military Funding bill or nearly three times the $11.1 million proposed by the US Executive branch to combat attempts by Philippine communist groups to lobby against the funding.

The Philippines is also getting a boost in the Economic Support Fund from $20 million to $50 million.

"We are thankful to our friends in both Houses of the US Congress and to the Executive branch for their faith in the government of the Philippines as demonstrated in the strong military funding currently appropriated to the Philippines," said Bunye.

Additional $2 million

Bunye said the bill carried a provision that would grant the Philippines an additional $2 million subject to the confirmation of the State Department that "we are implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Summary or Arbitrary Executions which we have largely done and that the Philippine military is not engaging in acts of intimidation or violence against members of legal, civic and religious organizations who advocate human rights."

The Arroyo administration has been criticized for its atrocious human rights record which local and foreign human rights groups claimed was worse than in martial law under President Marcos.

"It funding has been crucial to the many successes that the Philippines has achieved against terrorism. This is funding that has been critical to upgrading terrorism by bringing in basic infrastructure, healthcare, education to affected areas," said Bunye.

BUNYE

Antiterror law has many safeguards, says usec

By Clarissa O. Avendaño

THE HUMAN SECURITY ACT (HSA) OF 2007, also referred to as the antiterror law, contains enough safeguards against possible abuses by law enforcers.

Defense Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor stressed this as a forum held yesterday at the Ambassador Hotel in Manila.

Blancaflor, who is also spokesperson for the Anti-Terror Task Force, made the remarks to touch aside apprehensions regarding the law's implementation.

The IDA token officer on July 15.

Blancaflor said the HSA can be considered the only law in the country with so much punitive provisions against government law enforcers who abuse it.

"Not even the Revised Penal Code have that punitive provisions against government enforcers," he said.

He explained that those critical of the law were those who did not read it.

Many 'firsts'

He also noted the many "firsts" in the law, including the provision that "security" prohibits torture. He also cited 52 other provisions that deal with human rights.

It was also the first time that a law was required to be published in the newspapers, television and radio for one week, Blancaflor said.

Most importantly Blancaflor noted that there were 22 provisions in the law imposing penalties for government enforcers who abuse the law.

On the question that the law was a watered down version of the original proposed law, Blancaflor conceded that while this was "not exactly the ideal version," it was something that the government "can work with to fight terrorism."

He noted that the country ranks second in the United States in the number of fatalities from terrorist attacks.

He said that since the LRT bombing in December 2000, there were 330 Filipinos who were killed by terrorists.

And for the first time, Blancaflor said the country has a law that can stop terrorists from pushing ahead with their terror plans.

"In this country conspiracy to commit murder is not a crime. If 10 Pinoys plan to bomb seven plaza and finally decide to do it, we cannot stop them. Under Human conspiracy to commit terror is not a crime. But with this law, we can finally stop them. In the past we can only run after the suspects after a bomb had exploded. Now we have the rights to even stop them beforehand. That is even more important," he said.

4 Cebu judges suspended for making 'mockery' of marriage rites

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS PLACED FOUR Cebu City judges under suspension while being investigated for allegedly conducting mass marriages under irregular circumstances, thus "making a mockery of the sanctity of marriage."

Chief Justice Reynato Puno also directed the filing of administrative charges against the four judges for corruption, dishonesty, gross ignorance of the law and deliberate violation of the law on marriage.

The charges were filed against Municipal Trial Court in Cities Judges Amabilo Moscoso, Ali Acosta, Rosabella Tomio and Edgewardo Rosales, who were also suspended until the charges against them are resolved.

Puno ordered an investigation into the recruitment of the judges after being informed of the allegations against them by members of the religious and business community diplomats corps and other concerned groups during a trip to Cebu.

He said a judicial audit team found discrepancies and irregularities in the records.

"Undeniably, Judges Pleventes, Acosta, Rosales, and Tomio abused their authority to solemnize marriage, thereby making a mockery of the sanctity of marriage," the investigation report noted.

The team found that the figures from the office of the judges showed that they solemnized more marriages than the number of marriage certificates they issued.

It also found that there were marriages celebrated without the necessary documents like marriage licenses, certificates of legal capacity or joint affidavits or solemnization. There were also couples who were married without proof of payment of the required solemnization fee.

Several marriage licenses were obtained from civil registrars in areas where the parties did not live, the team said. It also cited discrepancies in the signatures of the local civil registrars of Bantayan Island in Cebu in the marriage licenses. These discrepancies indicate that the signatures could have been forged, it added.

The Supreme Court said two individuals interviewed affirmed confirming these findings and added that the package rate for the solemnization of marriage can go from P1,500 to P15,000.

Government Warnin
is dangerous

BACK TO MENDIOLA. Policemen and militant students clash during a rally near Mendiola Bridge in the first protest held on the six-mile Mayor Alfredo Lim lifted the no-rally policy in the area.

RESTING ON HIS TRUNCHEONS, an anti-riot policeman takes a breather during a rally near Mendiola yesterday.

g: Cigarette smoking
to your health

PSG won't let rallies come near Palace

NEWLY ELECTED MANILA MAYOR ALFREDO Lim may have lifted the ban on rallies at Mendiola but the Presidential Security Group would not allow protesters to threaten the security of the President as he or she goes Malacañang, specifically Mendiola Bridge.

"What we only want is protect the seat of power, the whole Malacañang premises. It depends on the situation, I hope the local government will understand our privilege to protect the seat of power," said PSG Chief Col. Romeo Peralosa.

Peralosa said he would have no barring a say on what mass protests would be allowed to be held on Mendiola Bridge and to determine whether organizers and participants were a threat to the security of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We must first talk if we can stop them in a particular rally. It's only right to let them come near Malacañang that many" he insisted.

Peralosa said Chief Lim should first verify in coordination with PSG, to determine whether the applicants for a rally permit were a threat to the President.

Peralosa was reacting to reports that Lim would allow activists to hold their rallies at Mendiola, specifically on weekends, as long as they obtain a permit and keep their mass demonstrations peaceful and orderly.

Lim backhands Estrada allies campaign promises to lift the rally ban imposed by his predecessor Mayor Lito Atienza, a staunch ally of the Palace.

Atienza imposed the no-rally zones last year when public unrest mounted against the President's alleged cheating in the 2004 elections and corruption scandals.

Peralosa said the PSG was willing to open coordination discussions with Lim. "I might send one of my men to coordinate with the office of Mayor Lim to discuss about the limitations to verify these orders. It just might be all talk and nothing to see paper. If their proposal is acceptable, why not?" said Peralosa.

INQ, Zaldy Comanda, Jr.

Malaysian held for 'trafficking' of Pinays to KL

By Jerome Aning

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION yesterday announced the arrest of a suspected Malaysian human trafficker and illegal recruiter caught in the act of escorting nine Filipino women for allegedly recruited to work as bar girls in Malaysian nightclubs.

Ko Chee Chen, 34, was arrested Thursday morning by members of the ISO's fugitive search unit at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Paranaque.

The suspect was accompanying nine women aboard on his AirAsia flight to Kuala Lumpur when caught. He is currently held at the NAIA detention center and will face deportation proceedings.

BI intelligence chief Brigid Mamaril said Chen has been the object of a manhunt and surveillance since his office was tipped about the Malaysian's activities based on the testimonies of his other alleged victims.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said Chen would be deported, later blacklisted and banned from reentering the country for being an undesirable alien.

INQUIRER

OPINION

Caught in contradictions

DEPOSED PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA'S SON, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, and their political allies must have been very pleased with what former Vice President Teofisto Guingona had to say. They rushed to him the place of honor at the center of the table during the press conference they called Thursday to discuss the latest developments on Estrada's plunder trial. And they had every good reason to be happy.

EDITORIAL

It was Guingona who was in the Senate in October 2000 to accuse Estrada of graft and corruption, betrayal of public trust, and violations of his oath of office. He said he had evidence to prove Estrada had accepted P220 million in payoffs from jueteng and pocketed P70 million from the excise tax on tobacco, and he urged the Senate to investigate the charges first made by then Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson. The privilege speech led to Estrada's impeachment trial and, subsequently, to the people power revolt that ousted Estrada from the presidency.

Last Thursday, Guingona was singing a different tune. Estrada, he said, is now "a man who has found a new light and a new life . . . he has new values and he is a new man." Pointing out that Estrada "has been down for more than six years," Guingona went on to propose that he be set free. "I say let us give justice now to Erap that he is down," he said. "I hope the court will acquit him. Let love-dom be for Erap."

However, Guingona appeared to have gotten carried away by his rhetoric to notice that he was getting caught in his own contradictions. Firstly, he never acknowledged that he had erred or had been guilty of making false accusations in that privilege speech. So what was his basis for calling for the disgraced former president's acquittal? Because Estrada is "down"? By the same token, after being hailed to court for any crime, but this is the first time anyone has suggested that being "down" is a ground for acquittal, especially on charges as serious as plunder.

Secondly, Guingona described Estrada as a "new man" who subscribes to "new values" and is now leading a "new life." So what was wrong with the old man and his old life and values? Why did Estrada need to change and to be renewed and reformed? Guingona again may not have realized it, but when he talked this way, the implication was that there was something wrong, depraved or contemptible about the old Estrada and his old lifestyle. Could it be that Guingona remains convinced Estrada is guilty of the crimes he charged him with?

Thirdly, Guingona, like the Estrada loyalists, equates justice with freedom for the former president. Can he not see justice being served with a decision to convict? Can he not give the Sandiganbayan and the justices hearing the case at least the benefit of the doubt? It is too difficult for him to see them serving as a guilty verdict based solely on their appreciation of the evidence and the testimony of witnesses? Or has he joined the chorus led by Estrada himself which claims that any verdict other than "not guilty" would only be the product of manipulation by the powers-that-be?

Like the Left which now claims disinterest in seeing Estrada punished, Guingona seems to have lost his capacity for outrage over the excesses and abuses Estrada stands accused of committing while in office. The result is a distorted sense of justice and a propensity to cast doubts on the integrity and independence of the judicial process without reason or cause.

Misrepresentation

WHEN PRESIDENT BUSH FELT THE NEED TO GIVE A speech on Iraq, his handlers arranged a gig at the United War College in Rhode Island.

But reporters traveling with the President noted that this military gathering, while impressive, didn't seem enthusiastic. Maybe that's because people in the military dislike lies as much as civilians do.

FOREIGN COMMENT

When Mr. Bush said that al-Qaida is "the main enemy" in Iraq, he surely knew that he was misrepresenting what Iraqis and others in the region think. They have used the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites to the main cause of violence.

Certainly, al-Qaida is a problem in Iraq. But it isn't the biggest problem, and it isn't the key to achieving stability. Americans count on their presidents to understand, not misrepresent, the big picture.

(The Courier-Journal/Louisville, Kentucky)

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The meaning of freedom

SEPARATE OPINION

Augusto A. Cruz

THE SUNDAY REMEMBRANCE IS NOT CELEbration of July 4 but Wednesday as our former Independminder Guy reminded me of an incident that to me emphasized the true meaning of freedom.

It happened many years ago, during the days following the end of the Japanese Occupation, when I was still a young man pursuing my studies in the University of the Philippines and was staying in Quezon Pavilion, Manila.

The city was then bustling with newcomers from the provinces, including hi-ell Mindanaos and the Visayas, who had come to enjoy the lights of Manila, and had decided to stay in the already crowded metropolis.

Traffic had vastly increased (literally increased, especially with the entry of the new-fangled "jeepney" that had replaced the old calesa and introduced the "modern" as the king of the road). Eventually congested was Quezon Boulevard in front of Quezon Pavilion, which housed the church of the Black Nazarene and Plaza Miranda was soon to become the forum of the nation.

Since it linked the people from the north of Manila, especially Malabon and Santa Mesa, and the suburbs in San Juan, Mandaluyong and Marikina to the business section in the Escolta and the Chinese enclave in Binondo, the crossing point between the two sections in R. Hidalgo was congested during the early morning hours.

The municipal board of Manila had not yet authorized the construction of a wooden overpass where the people could avoid the busy intersection traffic below (although they run the risk of pandemonium and even bold snipers wanting for a shot at target) and the traffic was non-coexistence, the waiting public had to wait many long and anxious minutes before they could cross the street on signal—and permission—of the traffic policeman on duty.

On that Saturday morning I remember, I was among the hundreds of pedestrians waiting for the signal for us to cross the street after seeing passed by stopping the cars bearing vehicles to their likewise urgent destinations. It was almost 8 o'clock and many office workers were desperately waiting to beat the Bundy clock and being deducted for tardiness. Yet, although the time was quite unnerving among us, we respected, although grudgingly, the authority of the traffic policeman.

Suddenly and unexpectedly, two burly American soldiers, in G.I. uniforms and with their rifles carelessly slung on their shoulders, appeared, ignoring the sense of pedestrians waiting for the signal to cross the street, they unceremoniously started to do so on their own, in defiance of the policeman on his beat and the rebuke that had rent the night air.

The policeman stood at attention to see what would happen. And we did not have long to do so because the traffic policeman wasted immediately. As the vehicles stopped to give way to the American soldiers, he blew his whistle and strided toward the soldiers, who had stopped midway in the street. They barked with police force at the angry policeman, probably wondering what was happening. After all, they were busy thought, they were American for who had just "liberated" the country.

The angry police officer, with all the authority of his command started down the two soldiers and ordered them to stop. He told them to go back, not arrogantly but respectfully and told them they had to wait like the other pedestrians for the green wave to indicate to cross. He was a fine sincere man the ears Americans, but it was clear that he was the one giving the orders.

The two soldiers obeyed. They stopped back and joined the rest of the people waiting to cross the street on signal from the traffic policeman. He was acting on the authority of the law for the maintenance of order in our crowded street. Without him, that portion of Quezon Boulevard would have been awash in confused pedestrians, passengers and vehicles and must likely in accidents and even bloodshed.

The soldiers were probably resentful in some inchoate humiliated and had muttered death in the face against their deadly enemies. But they had the good will, and the intelligence, in acknowledging the authority of the lowlier but respectful policeman who had shown the soldiers and asked them to step back with the other pedestrians waiting for his signal to cross.

It struck me then that another mission of the law might have been rendered by the two burly and decided American soldiers who had come in our country to help us drive away the Japanese occupiers from our territory. He must have thought that we owed them a tremendous debt of gratitude for which we should be allowed the small courtesy to cross while the rest of his countrymen patiently waited.

But our traffic policeman did not think so. He had the courage to enforce his authority and the law (people, you can cross Quezon Boulevard to reach whatever they want) going on time. All means everybody, including armed and battle-tested American soldiers. Fortunately, the soldiers (whatever underneath their Filipino policeman's authority and they obeyed him and stepped back as he commanded, or if you like, respect. The important thing to him, to his credit and also of the two soldiers), he was obeyed.

I remembered that incident last July 4 and the simple lesson it taught that freedom, to be meaningful, must be observed.

Who's against letting the rule of law prevail?

GET REAL

Sylvia Colina-Montemar

I SAW THAT "LET THE RULE OF LAW PREvail" ad in the newspapers on Wednesday and I didn't think there was anything ominous about it. In fact, the message seemed unobjectionable: Let the rule of law prevail. Who, after the dismissal of the Sandiganbayan on the Erap plunder case, and whatever we think of his guilt or innocence. The last thing this country needs is another act of tables and benches that may make the legislature out of presumption for right-thinking Filipinos who are here know the score, although some aren't show presuming to be upset, handing up spot more somersaults from the government), and definitely we say traffic and generally hurt businesses for the rest.

And who could possibly object to letting the rule of law prevail? We are all sick and tired of people who consider themselves above the law—whether they are at the top or at the bottom (some policemen have the other ways where other policemen abuse their authority) of the power totem pole—and who expect (and, alas, receive!) special treatment. He knew that break-to-meet abuses of power had given our collective experience with "special" treatment presented to the recently ousted president (Erap, ehm), a reminder about the rule of law...as well as the need for vote—should, I thought anyway, be welcome.

Come to think of it, guess precisely that many silent days we are allow the rich and powerful to get away with figurative murder; it would be more reasonable to think that the ad about respecting the rule of law was more likely addressed to those who think Erap is guilty but will be acquitted, allowing them to stay rich.

But judging from the strident reaction of the Erap partisans, they not how the ad hit them. Which is what it is supposing. Because I can't figure out what their basis is for saying that the ad is a thinly veiled plea to "release" the public to bind to an Erap conviction. I went over the 142-word message (including title) four or five times, in case I missed anything else first couple of times, but still no seeming Erap-sized up.

Maybe, if we go sentence by sentence, something will come up.

"Erap Guilty or not guilty: Endanger Erap may guilt?" All the words had the same font. The "guilty" wasn't any more emphasized than the rest. So that's out. But wait! The word "guilt" could be the key to a whole series of word associations and hidden implications. Perhaps the Erap partisans associate those words with "guilty" (they know, after all, have initiated a lot of the "guilts," wouldn't you say?) and therefore feel that they are the ones being addressed. Once that premise is accepted, one can go to town with the line of thinking along the following: "guilty" is associated with Erap's guilt; "thumbs, if the ad is advised "guilt," is associated that whatever took out that ad must know that the Sandiganbayan decision will go against Erap. And that kind of foreknowledge must in such cases a close link with the Sandiganbayan justices, which must, then mean that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is involved. And since GMA is involved, well, then it must also follow that the fallout for the pro-Erap—to vote the Erap, ex-boss. Why? Because she is a vindictive person, and would Erap to suffer for making her suffer (or pretending to that effect...you know-to-Erap).

That has to be about the longest stretch of logic a title can twist up with—starting from the word "guilt" all the way to GMA selling the justices to hang Erap out to dry. And up this basis, we have the opposition coming out of that with a group can become arrested to be—well, we all saw the pictures. Erap the victim, Gloria the villain.

Can we do a little reflection here, please?

Is the premise that "guilt" is a phenomenon associated solely with the Erap group economic-only case? Wasn't Erap's public proclamation the result of a "guilt" that was incited by those opposing him (arch Tito Sotto)ma, and subsequently Nene Pimentel, and subsequently Nene Villar at the forefront, and aided with his "conscience-inspired"? If only Erap's group can accuse "guilt," don't they mean that the opposition, too, value was the patent from left to right, are those who convinced that they have "done wrong" or are we still and can need to demonstrate again? Because that sound farfetched?

Let's not even touch the possibility that "guilt" can be owned by Erap opponents as well as partisans, the line of the logic is broken...and we are still with an ad that, dare I say, sounds extremely reasonable, and with no hidden agendas.

So as far the issues accept the initial premise of a one-sided "guilt," and look at what follows: that (a) the President calls the shots over the Sandiganbayan justices and (b) that she wants Erap convicted.

With respect to (a), I have no idea whether GMA approached the justices strong on the Erap case, but if her experience with the Supreme Court (the majority of whom are her appointees) is any indication, there is no basis for assuming that she can dictate to the Sandiganbayan justices.

With respect to (b), is just doesn't make sense for GMA to want him convicted, and then try to extol "guilt" with an ad campaign, for heaven's sake. If she doesn't want "guilt," why with her hand in reward a punishment? Wouldn't it be more logical for her to extend her hand in reward to be acquitted?

While GMA can be accused of many things, I don't think anybody has ever accused her of having a dull brain. Would (as opposed to a not, but) one—except perhaps when her husband is concerned.

Let's leave Erap's fate to the courts

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cantiveros

SO THE DAY THE SANDIGANBAYAN IS EXPECTED to release its verdict on the fate of deposed President Joseph Estrada's opposition is... remember, we're talking high-tension again. The opposition is quite clear that he should never be set free; he has suffered enough in six years of detention. But pro-administration people say that the master should be left to the mercy of the servant and that his decision will be, we should all accept it, correct.

I fully sympathize with the plight of the former president. But I agree with the latter group.

There are those who, fearing that the Sandiganbayan is under the thumb of Malacañang, seek to destroy the court's credibility this early. They say there will be a conviction, and Estrada's camp will cry foul and march from Rizal Park to Malacañan. That is fairness to the Sandiganbayan. I think it has not given any indication that it can be deemed open for the threats, or the concern, of both the defense who's nothing to lose and the prosecution who's nothing to gain. Besides, the Sandiganbayan is a fully independent tribunal (and exactly pattern with Estrada's lawyers) who extended to a full bag of tricks to delay its chosen—while awaiting a new regime). Then, too, the six years long trial has been fully transparent. All the evidence were able to exhaust all arguments. The accused alone (the graft court being under the Palace's influence is being spread by chance the whole country.

On the matter of the full-page ads titled, "Erap: Guilty or Not Guilty? Kailangan Bang Mas Galit?" which appeared in major newspapers the other day, Palace supporters are accused of being behind the ads. According to them, I am nothing wrong with it. I think the ads merely seek to calm down passions and remind people that the president should be accorded by all. The accused call for restraint and caution, not a reign of passion, which the opposition seems to be instigating this early.

* * *

Reports say the Independent Electoral Commission (Comelec) is set to meet with the Palace today. The Comelec's three judges have to make a unanimous decision. Otherwise, two-other parties will have to sit with them, and a majority decision is needed for a ruling. If there's a conclusion, there

[illegible] the Comelec's decision is expected to come out. But if there's no consensus, then the Comelec will have to wait for the [illegible] decision.

* * *

Many people say that an acquittal would be more complicated than a conviction, as this would cause the nation to have two presidents, with each [illegible] to reclaim his old position. This issue has to be taken out of the graft court justices at this point.

* * *

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves is far less worried about the handling the Commission on Appointments than the economy's attaining the right revenue collection target. The reason is that the government's economic team, which he heads, fears that their projections would be in danger if the tax revenue shortfall exceeds the target deficit this year. This worry has resulted in the ouster of Bill Commissioner Jose Mari Buhyang, under whose term tax collections have fallen short by 4 percent [illegible] 2006. Teves has stepped up as a part-time [illegible]. I should explain that over the decades when he was the chair of the finance committee committee, he and I would have periodical conversations about the economy. He would explain in various aspects which I would write about as simply as I could.

* * *

This time Teves seemed that the government deficit, which in the past few years has been reversed to the satisfaction of the international rating agencies [enough to merit better credit ratings], should not be allowed to go beyond P60 billion.

When the deficit goes up, government can opt to cut down on spending for infrastructure. Teves is against this. However, that investment this badly needed infrastructure, as this is what encourages domestic and international investors.

The other way to reduce the national deficit is to increase tax collection, say by imposing new taxes (the President said she won't do this) but by making collection more efficient and streamlined (the former is obviously opposition to that graft).

* * *

Teves explained that 70 percent of tax revenues are derived from the BIR, the rest from the Bureau of Customs and other government fees and charges. Hence, the collection [illegible] government, in order to attain development, has to resort to the selling of government corporate assets and other non-tax revenue measures—something to which he [illegible] is opposed. There is a reason that the latter may be necessary is more efficient tax collection. He pointed out that BIR's tax base is perhaps the smallest in the region with only about two million people paying taxes. The actual tax base should be 10 percent of the population—meaning 8 million, out of 83 million Filipinos.

Rico Oblifia pledge not to raise taxes. Teves said that one way to achieve the goal would be to increase revenues through a more effective tax administration: enhancing the tax data base and cleaning up the taxpayers' list and the income tax structure. This means making sure the big income fishes pay their correct levies, and not only the fingers of the self-employed people—the doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, real estate people and others in the booming services sector—who may be underpaying their taxes.

Against the current

BEING AN ENVIRONMENTALIST IS PROBABLY ONE OF the most thankless jobs in the world. The compensation is woefully small, and it often takes us our last personal [illegible] to finance [illegible] projects and research.

My parents are one [illegible]. So when am I doing, working as an environmentalist? Why do I see [illegible] hundreds of thousands of Filipinos who are migrating to greener pastures? Why are [illegible] myself employed in a big company [illegible] lets me enjoy a high salary, [illegible] a laptop and other cool [illegible] why [illegible] in the environment?

YOUNG BLOOD

Five-and-Tenpenny
S. Quintero

After working for several years as an [illegible] [illegible] I recently came to a realization in my life. A reputable company offered me a starting salary that was more than twice what I am earning now, plus a brand new car, which I could use after five years. It was every man's dream job after a friend's endorse.

Back then, about [illegible] years ago, I would have turned it down [illegible]. As a fresh graduate of marine biology, my idealism was intact and my resolve to save the environment was strong. But [illegible] and with my [illegible] with each [illegible] [illegible] that are [illegible] or [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

LETTERS

Filipino farmers should plant potatoes instead of rice

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE LETTER "SELF-sufficiency key to food security" (Business, 7/3/07) Considering our typhoons, killer rivers and need for huge irrigation facilities, it is obvious that our area of rice production is higher than that of China, Thailand and Vietnam. So why don't we grow potatoes instead? You can produce 80 tons of potatoes in one hectare of land, or 16 tons if grown organically with less water. This is still better than rice, [illegible] that produce 10 tons a hectare. Plus the rice that [illegible] and selling rice at a loss. Compounding this problem is that the NFA [illegible] money] alone to keep it in better in deciding how the taxpayer should spend his money. [illegible] Apparently, the taxpayers cannot spend his own money well enough to suit his own needs [illegible] more equitable local rice if he thinks he needs it or not! Let me ask the letter-sender, are we not subject to the regime of market forces if the NFA buys the rice? If a typhoon hits our harvest, will we not pay taxes for our rice by giving the NFA a bigger budget through taxes? Plus 600 persons, we're talking 50% operations, etc.?

But there is one consequence I can see if the government pursues the policy: the 50% may well become useless and may be abolished...leaving the 600 personnel without the job of making rice more equitable (through taxes). It is a select-direct clan 50% people are against this policy of supply stabilization? I think not.

—MARK REID,
26 Bonifacio St., Ayala Heights, Bifiman, QC

Report on link to drug suspect baseless

THIS IS IN REFERENCE TO THE ARTICLE THAT cited "Cops link actor's wife to Pasig drug scam" (Inquirer, 6/23/07). The report linked Jacinta Suarez to Amir Imam Berroong and his wife Mirnie. To quote:

"Jacinta Suarez, the wife of actor Bing Suarez, had links to suspected Pasig City shabu dealer-operator Amir Imam Berroong, an official of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Unit-Special Operation Task Force (PDEU-SOTF) said Tuesday.

"SOSOSOTF source Roque Montoya said Suarez had been on the police watch list because of her connections to Berroong and his wife Mirnie.

"Berroong was the alleged owner of a compound in Pasig City that housed 30 to 40 shabu dens which were raided by police in February 2006.

"Berroong is now detained in the National Bureau of Investigation pending trial on drug charges, while Mirnie is at large, although there is a pending arrest warrant against her for the murder of informant Gemian Cubeso.

"Shelly Jr. said Jacinta was involved in Berroong's 'sales' network and had been on the police list for five years."

The linking of our client, Imam Suarez, to—and his wife Mirnie—to Perlina Suarez is a very serious matter; it is highly irresponsible and libelous. There is no truth to it. Our client does not know anyone named Perlina Suarez. The article is likewise libelous and damaging.

While it is a fact that our client Amir is a suspected shabu den operator, the case against him is still pending litigation and has not been decided on. We maintain that our client is presumed innocent until proven otherwise. Just as precisely linking our client to all the cases of drug pushing and other drug incidents is totally unfair and highly irresponsible.

—EDUARDO A. RODRIGUEZ,
Rodriguez Bahaluyo Farm and Associates,
1009 Grapia St., Sta. Ana, Manila

The story was based on information obtained from the police. However, it also quoted another source who said that the information had not been fully verified at the investigation on the Pasig's request was yet incomplete. Nothing in the story categorically links lawyer Rodriguez's client(s) to Berroong.

—KRISTINE L. SLAVE,
reporter, Inquirer

NBI report on Lanao House race not conclusive

I AM WRITING ON BEHALF OF THE WINNING congressional candidate for the first district of Lanao del Norte (based on official Comelec records) regarding the erroneous and misleading news report that appeared in the Inquirer's July 2 issue.

The news report stated that the National Bureau of Investigation has established that the ballot boxes were "no longer in their original state." A closer scrutiny of the news article at all shows that the NBI report is non-conclusive. The report did not say that the ballot boxes were tampered with or that the ballot boxes were allegedly no longer in their original state; the NBI did not find any discrepancy or tampering in the certificates of canvass (COCs) representing the votes from the entire of Magsi, Kauswagan and Bacolod.

Since the NBI found no evidence of tampering on the CoCs (the documents used for canvassing), the Special Provincial Board of Canvassers (SPBOC) of Lanao del Norte continued the canvass in the presence of all the parties concerned. It must be noted that the CoCs canvassed by the SPBOC were genuine and authentic.

It was also reported that the CoC for the elected Kauswagan mayor was rejected in the official count as it was duplicated. Again, we would like to point out that the SPBOC here [illegible] canvassed the CoC for Kauswagan and included it in the official tally. Since the COC for Kauswagan was canvassed by the SPBOC, there is no basis to say that the COC was set aside following the doctrine of "institutional incapacitating."

The doctrine is not applicable in this case because the number of registered voters did not equal the number of votes cast for one candidate and there is an showing that the other party attempted to wrest at all. In fact, the total number of votes cast for all the candidates is still below the number of registered voters. The appeal of Councilor Wilfredo Bermoso, through his lawyer, implies a different conclusion that has no legal basis.

—LAURENCIO, RULE SIMONSON,
legal counsel for Gov. Imelda Q. Munoz,
Unit 1111 City and Land Mega Plaza Bldg.,
ADB Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Harvard graduation feat not a 'rare honor'

THIS IS ABOUT OSCAR FRANKLIN DAN'S commencement speech, which was the subject of a news feature that appeared in the Inquirer issue of June 8, 2007. Unable to find articles in the Harvard websites that would back up the Inquirer's report, I went instead to reader's advocacy. I got a reply from Elizz Ordoñez, an editorial intern for Harvard Magazine. In her response, she stated: "I was told by the Law School administrators that the subjects of prizes it has received is quite unusual." By "prizes," she means the local Filipino media since it was she carried the news except down.

The Inquirer reported that "for received 'the rare honor as the commencement speaker of the Harvard Law School.'" However, Ordoñez said that "students campaign on campus to be elected by their classmates as graduation speakers." Where is the Filipino prize "truth in reporting?" How much of what it prints can we believe?

It is indeed an honor for one to be elected by his peers of law classmates to be their class graduation speaker. But this honor is not one that can be classified as "rare."

Nonetheless, Dan's speech, capturing his fellow classmates to look at themselves as children of the world, was a great speech.

The Harvard Law School commencement speaker was Guido Calabresi, a former dean of the Yale Law School and a judge of the US Court of Appeals. It would have been indeed a "rare honor" if Dan had been the law school commencement speaker instead of Judge Calabresi.

—BOB RAMAYAN,
bobramayan@msn.com

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

No good news awaits Italian envoy

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THERE WILL BE NO GOOD news for Italian lawmaker Margherita Boniver.

Boniver was scheduled to meet with top military and civilian officials here Friday night that Task Force Ipon chief Col. Jovencio Magdale said there was nothing to tell the lawmaker about developments in the rescue operations for kidnapped priest Giancarlo Bossi.

"I am afraid we cannot deliver good news for her," Magdale said.

Boniver kept Prime Minister Romano Prodi's chief of Zamboanga Sibugay, concede on the issue.

"I wish something positive will come our enemies today (Friday) so we can deliver her good reports regarding Bossi," Cruz told said.

"Right now, no proof of life, no proof of whereabouts, but there were lots of reports on sightings but no positive confirmation," Cruz said added.

Fr. Giosvi Battista Lodola, regional superior of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (Pime), said Boniver was expected to arrive in this city on board a military plane at around 6 p.m. Friday.

"She might also stand in (Pime) in another venue," Lavalo told the business.

Magdale said they would tell Boniver that "everyone is involved in the search and rescue for Bossi."

"We use a saying, in fact, we double up our efforts but if the will not where Bossi is, it's already a different story and difficult to operate."

Cruz said that with the endless search by Bossi, "our hands are draining."

Despite this, he said, "we keep on looking for him."

Sundido earlier expressed regret that some in the military and the police involved Bossi.

"Who is it so difficult to find a big, tall Caucasian man in seven where he is supposedly a familiar face to almost everyone?" he asked.

Sundido said he could not understand why it was so hard for authorities to locate Bossi, who is a familiar face in the Zamboanga Peninsula.

Fr. Luciano Benedetti, also of Pime, said Bossi knows the peculiar, including its rainy (4) lapse, its kindness and rudeness.

Benedetti said Bossi, who is 57 years old, "really get tired."

But Magdale said "if kidnappers are determined to keep him (Bossi) away from the public's eye, they can do so."

Magdale said they suspect the kidnappers had Bossi in some makeshift shelters in the mountainous.

Police said three battalions had been deployed in the search.

He said the 32nd Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army had already pulled out from their posts in the boundaries of the two provinces.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was first to withdraw forces from the search and rescue operations, to prevent clashes with government troops.

But the MILF said it was ready to help once the priest and his kidnappers are located. Aelaf L. Alipala and Rachel Zoud, Inquirer Mindanao

SC imposes fine on judge who lost case papers

By Carlo P Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE SUPREME Court found a regional trial court judge based in Silay City guilty of gross negligence for misplacing the records of a case he was handling.

The SC imposed a fine of P10,000 on RTC, Branch 40 Judge Reynaldo Alan Jose Caballero.

The SC issued a decision from 27 on Mon's case.

SC Associate Justice Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez penned the resolution, which was concurred in by Associate Justices Conchita Morales Rodrigo, Minita Chico-Nazario and Antonio Eduardo Nachura.

The SC ruling said it was the judge's responsibility to ensure that records of cases in court are "properly kept and those cases disposed of promptly and expeditiously."

Sec. SC rules require judges to decide on cases in 90 days.

Stern warning

"It was bad enough that respondent failed to submit his investigation report and recommendation within the prescribed period. But to also lose the records of the case is unpardonable," the SC said.

The SC issued a stern warning that a similar offense in the future shall be dealt with more severely.

The case is an offshoot of the administrative complaint of Inst. Lin Tan against Honorio L. Robles, Branch 40, RTC, Branch 40, Silay City and docketed as A.M. OCA IPI No. 04-1767-P.

The SC, on July 3, 2002 resolved to refer the administrative complaint to Atty. for investigation and recommendation within 90 days from receipt of the records.

However, Atty. submitted his report only on Feb. 19, 2005, or almost three years after the required date of submission, the SC said.

The SC then directed Atty. to explain the unreasonable delay in rendering his report.

Reasons

Atty. said he had not given much thought about the case and cited several causes of the delay such as his being replaced as executive judge in 2000 and being re-appointed only in April 2005, in addition to his tasks as judge designate of Branch 40, La Carlota City, the SC noted.

The SC also noted as unreasonable Atty.'s assertion that the delay is the disposition of the case shattered from the request of the complainant to hold in abeyance the investigation until an official record was executed by Inst.

"The respondent should have known that an affidavit of desistance does not operate to divest the Court of jurisdiction to determine the truth behind the matter stated in the complaint," the SC pointed out.

The court's disciplinary authority could not be dependent on or hampered by private arrangements between parties, it added.

"The respondent should have, therefore, sent the issue head-on without any further delay," the SC said.

TALL ORDER President Macapagal-Arroyo strikes a commanding pose with a bulldozer operator who was working on the expansion of the Bagabag Airport in Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya.

C. Luzon Army, PNP execs to sign new plan vs guerrillas

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—TOP military and police officials in Central Luzon are scheduled to sign here on July 11 a memorandum of agreement on a joint counter-insurgency plan that aims to put an end to the communist rebellion in the region by 2010.

The plan, which was finalized last Thursday, is independent of its antiterrorism program being prepared by Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, commander of the Manila Security Are, the regional police director, Chief Supt. Jemmel Rubinos, and to a phone interview on Friday.

The final endorsement of the new law would have to wait until after the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the law were made, he said. The implementing rules supposed to meet on July 15.

"We did not define the attack on it during the endorsement because it still did not have an IRR," Rubinos said of the controversial law that prohibited attacks had declared as a tool of the Arroyo administration to repress dissent.

Distinct orders

At Thursday's meeting in Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, he said it was clear to military and police commanders that the anti-insurgency and antiterror plans were "distinct" from each other."

Rubinos said the area, there were regional anti-insurgency programs was under in line with Executive Order No. 546 of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Signed last June, the EO directed the Philippine National Police to "actively support" the armed forces in internal security operations.

Rubinos said the final draft of the MOA recognizes the local role of the Army in dealing with the insurgency problem.

The PRU on the other hand, will not only provide intelligence information but will also conduct combat operations in coordination with the Army's 7th Infantry Division.

"What we are trying to achieve this time is a more unified effort in solving insurgency," Rubinos said.

Before it opened to several regions battle-country communist-armed rebellion took its roots in Central Luzon with the founding of the old Communist Party of the Philippines in 1930 and the new CPP in 1968 and their respective armies, the Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan and the New People's Army.

Clearing operations

But the price, said Rubinos, does not employ military solutions only.

"Our government and government agencies are going to handle the development plans by addressing the roots of rebellion like poverty and ignorance through economic programs," he said.

Military and police commanders are set to sign the MOA in the presence of governors and mayors from Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Pinatubo Region, Tarlac, Zambales, expected to be the meeting here of the regional peace and order council on Wednesday.

Senior Supt. Abelardo Allaza-no, chief of the regional police's operations, also expected to attend the meeting.

The new program seeks to "clear all guerrilla fronts and neutralize the political-military structures of the enemy in the region."

Bus firm told to stick to antiterror deal

LUTRAWD CITY—POLICE AUthorities in North Cotabato have appealed to the management of Rimas Bus company to stick to the security arrangement between the police and bus firm officials to avoid a repeat of bombings on the buses.

Senior Insp. Rojie Bones, North Cotabato police spokesperson, said the spate of bombings occurred in the bus's own policies when it started picking up passengers in between terminals along the Davao-Cotabato route.

"We appeal to them to observe self-restraint to save passengers' lives," the told radio station DXRJ in Kidapawan City.

Following the series of bomb attacks against the bus firm last month, they closed at least 10 lines, the Rimas bus company decided to allow passengers to board and disembark only in bus terminals.

Bomb attacks occurred in Barangay Bantuan, Davao del Sur, Cotabato City and Sinsuhon, North Cotabato in June.

But lately, Bones said, drivers have been violating the policies first introduced in

Edmundo Arimbad, Rimas bus company terminal manager in Cotabato City, said he will act on the police authorities' appeal.

Bus drivers, especially of the non-aircondition units, are taking in passengers along the highway, a practice that made the bus fit in vulnerable to bomb attacks.

Police have deployed motorbike aboard the bus to check on all bags and boxes carried by passengers. Bomb-sniffing dogs were also deployed at every bus terminal.

"The bus company has fostered its guard," Bones said, citing complaints from commuters.

Antonieta Gerbolon, a regular bus passenger of the Davao-bound buses here, said he would avoid buses if he sees carrying that they have to pick passengers "in mid-street."

"This is dangerous because some buses have no marshals, and passengers noticed that the bus conductors do not check on the boxes and bank packs carried by riding individuals," he told the business.

He said security only becomes tight after a bomb attack.

North Cotabato Vice Gov. Emmanuel Dibol has directed the local police to conduct mobile checkpoints on roads on buses in between terminals. Edwin G. Antonelus, Inquirer Mindanao

THE SPOILS Evicted tenants attach one of Wenca Inc.'s tractors to be seized in Barcelona, Davao del Sur. Eight people were killed here. (ALEXIS TORRES JR./INQUIRER MINDANAO)

Tampakan mayor nabbed for 2004 murder of brother

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police arrested yesterday the mayor of Tampakan, South Cotabato, in connection with the July 2004 murder of dedicated mayor of another South Cotabato town.

Senior Supt. Norbert Kimpolo, South Cotabato police chief, said Mayor Raymundo "Boyboy" Bacaltos did not resist arrest when police served the arrest warrant issued by a court against him.

Kimpolo said his office received a copy of the arrest warrant issued by Judge Jose Mendoza, of the Regional Trial Court Branch 38 based in Isabela, just a few days ago.

Bacaltos was the uncle Mayor Ramon "arno" Piggad by followers as in the masterminds in the killing of Bunol.

Bunol, a businessman in Tampakan, was gunned down on July 26, 2004 by three motorcycle-riding men in downtown Tampakan.

The Bacaltos, however, denied the charge.

The family of the victim petitioned the court to transfer the venue of the case from Isabela to Manila for security reasons and to ensure a fair trial of the case. Agnes Zenia, Inquirer Mindanao

TODAY, GK CELEBRATES A HISTORIC LANDMARK.

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FUTURE FULL OF HOPE
Jasan Reyes, Reformed Gang Member
Bagong Silang

NEW POLITICS
Susie Lacuesta, Mayor
San Isidro N.E.

FAITH IN ACTION
Ate Sanchez, Catholic lay preacher, bad-selling author

BEST FOR THE LEAST
Lito Policarpio
GK Worker for the Aetas of Tarlac

"The Aetas have been neglected and looked down for so many years. GK has shown us how to love and care for them. Now we see them as equal in worth and dignity as Filipinos and as children of God."

GIVING ALL, DARING ALL
Roberto Bocaletc, Fisherman, Land Owner
Pangil, Laguna

A CULTURE OF BAYANIHAN
Bobby Barrera
TV Executive, GK Volunteer

BEYOND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
JOAN ZACATE, Globe Employee

"GK is such an inspiration to the Globe employees, even really every time we visit the Globe TM GK Village in Bagong Silang where Ryanmhan is truly alive. Hanon-wala ako na Globe ang GK 777 because the new breed of Filipino believes in giving their best to make it happen. Mas maraming bahay pag sama-sama."

Globe
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INQUIRER Visayas

A festive blast into the Warays' past

By Vicente S. Labro
Tacloban City

FOR TWO WEEKS, TACLOBAN, THE premiere city of Eastern Visayas, wrestled from a frenzy of activities, highlighted by festivities that gave a glimpse of the people's rich heritage.

The merriment was part of the annual celebration of the feast of Señor Sto. Niño, the patron saint of Tacloban and Leyte.

The Kasadyaan Pamaulin Festival of Festivals (also June 30 later) thousands of spectators, including foreign tourists who were treated to a dance extravaganza that portrayed the way of life, livelihood and religious beliefs of the early inhabitants.

The dance parade along the major streets ended at the city sports complex for the showdown of groups in colorful costumes. This year, the contingent of Abuyog, Leyte, which presented the Binyagan Festival, won the competition.

The event is the region's version of the fiesta-ng-fiesta, the Dinagyang of Iloilo, and the Ati-atihan of Aklan—all held in honor of the Child Jesus.

But unlike in other places, where the feast day of the Sto. Niño is held in January, Tacloban has been celebrating it every June 30 for the past 114 years.

'El Capitan'

An unrelated event that a century ago changed the way the feast was observed in the city. In late 1888, the image of the Sto. Niño was brought to Manila for some ornaments and restoration work. It was shipped back to Manila in January 1889, just a couple of weeks before the fiesta.

On its way to Tacloban, the boat carrying the image caught fire somewhere between the islands of Romblon and Marinduque. In the ensuing commotion, the image was among the cargo that was presumed.

The loss of the image saddened the people of Tacloban. Several months later, a new image of the Holy Child was procured and it was named the "Santo," (The missing Sto. Niño was known as "El Capitan.")

In May 1889, however, a fisherman recovered a cross with a marking of "Sto. Niño De-ron de Tacloban" floating near Semirara Island off Mindoro.

A DANCER carries an image of the Sto. Niño.

It (cross was sent to verify the report and bring it back to Tacloban. On June 30, while the people were preparing for a procession of the image of San Roque to implore its end to a cholera epidemic that struck then (someone), word spread that the "El Capitan" has finally arrived.

The people rejoiced as they reunited with the image of the Sto. Niño. It was said that those who were ill were healed when the procession passed by them.

FEMALE performers show their dancing skill.

THIS WOMAN riding on a spear-toss from the contingent from Abuyog, Leyte, —the Binyagan Festival—tied over the year's Kasadyaan Pamaulin Festival of Festivals in Tacloban City.

Since then, Tacloban has decided to have the feast day on the Holy Child fall on June 30. They celebrate their fiesta with a countdown titled "Hiras," and Eucharist and local processions to show their love and devotion to the Sto. Niño.

Another religious event observed every Fiesta is the "Balya-an Hiras," or the exchange of the images of the Sto. Niños. It is said that the reverential image enshrined at the Sto. Niño Church originated in Tolosa.

According to legend, the parish priest of Dulag went to Tolosa just to see the Sto. Jesuses. Seeing that exchanging the big image of the Sto. Niño of Barrio Poblacion in Dulag with a smaller one belonging to Kinalumsan, the oldest name of Tacloban.

For several decades, this act of swapping images has been annulled in the "Balya-an Hiras," participated in by the parish priests and local officials of Tacloban and Dulag.

Subiran Regatta

Another activity that dates on the Waray-Waray's past is the Subiran Regatta, sponsored annually by the Department of Tourism.

For the past 11 years now, the sailboat race has always drawn crowds. On June 28, it lured 47 participants and hundreds of spectators.

Used by the early Visayan who were mostly seafarers, the "subiran" or wind-driven outrigger sail-ed has been a useful means of transportation of small fishermen in Leyte and Samar.

Someone from Basurgan Viejo in Guiuan, Leyte, was said of the future of the 9-meniscal sails race.

Frisbee fever grips Iloilo City

By Ma. Divas Labras
Iloilo City

NO LONGER WOULD THE ILONGGO PEOPLE consider frisbee a game of catch for dogs after Iloilo City welcomed the first Ultimate Frisbee Tournament at La Paz district plaza on June 30.

Hosted by the 3-month-old Iloilo Ultimate Club, the event brought together players from Manila and Boracay, who were the favorites to grab the top posts.

It was the Iloilo club's second time to join any tournament after the first in May in Boracay. While they finished last in a five-hole round robin match on Saturday, the Ilonggo team considered it an honor to be throwing discs with the strong players in the country.

Jace Imbon Abab, the coin-tossed players decided to declare two teams from Boracay in the first place, Manila, second, Iloilo team 1, third and Iloilo team 2, fourth.

Playing the game

Frisbee is played with a flying disc, but it is no fly-by-a-mere throwing game. It combines the highlights of soccer, football—the passing and the fluidity of soccer, the jumps and plays of basketball, and the thrilled touchdown of football.

Much like soccer and football, the game is played on a rectangular field with end zones on scoring areas. It's a fast game, almost no contact sport that allows women to play alongside men. Here we find in a team of seven every game.

A pressing need, Imbon is under the wing of Philippine Ultimate Sport, which has at least 500 members spread in more than a dozen clubs all over the country.

Some clubs have online presence in websites to surf as Friendster, blogs and YouTube. They give insights into their pursuit, seriousness in pursuing the game, and age level.

'Art, art, art'

Rookie first wave of the ultimate frisbee came in July 2006 when a young Ilonggo professional, Jude Adan Jomilo, got a phone call from another Ilonggo yuppie, Erik Rey Villa, to play frisbee.

Villa didn't know that Jomilo's disc history was in a country player in New York's Bronx Science High School from 1992 to 1995. In 2006, while on vacation in Iloilo City, Jomilo introduced the disc but it never caught interest then.

In September last year, Jomilo and his cousin, Rodolfo Boss, and five common friends, Ayie Ann Rosales and Tara Sevenia, brought the game to the football field of Central Philippine University. Instead of touting the new game, bystanders were shouting "Art, art, art."

Rookie and his friends moved to La Paz plaza and were able to assemble a team from bystanders and passersby, who could end or run touring the disc.

Rise of the game

In the next three months, the plaza became the force of the game, now having as players doctors, nurses, a lawyer, policeman, seafarers and pastors. From the core, were come Jude and members like Angelo Rolston Baul dizayan, Ramona Sancio, Marcelino Sandoval, Emmel Selma, Arabella Rolston and Aaron Salvio.

SLDB Cyclopes during a game against the Manila team

Abuyan and Sancio are nursing students who find time to join Imbon at forbear hospital duties and schoolwork. "It relieves us of stress and keeps us calm," said Sancio.

Abuyan and Rolston decided to bring back the game to the CPU and, this time, a dozen more students.

The UPU group eventually provided the members of the Iloilo Ultimate Club to organize the city to 2007 Asian Beach Ultimate Tournament in Boracay in May.

The club played 12th out of the 16 teams that competed. It was composed of Imbon, Abuyan, Sancio, Steve Francis Tupaz, Alvino Espinosa, Ary Ben Limayon, Arnel Bendanillo, HL Melo, Jamsary Gonda, Lan Marie Lucel and Imbon.

Jomilo said it was "not bad for their virgin experience in an official competition."

The Iloilo Ultimate Club has 70 members, 20 of them women.

Sponsorship for the Iloilo tournament was not much of a problem, said Jomilo. Most of the donors were friends of the local players, and Jomilo took it as a sign that ultimate frisbee game is on the rise.

LateSPORTS

More Sports stories on A27 to 30

ALASKA center Sonny Thoss makes a layup past the defense of Talk 'N Text import JJ Taitingfong in the first quarter of Game 1 of the best-of-seven championship series between the Aces and the Phone Pals. AUGUST MIRANDA

Alaska defuses TNT

Red Bull takes 3rd; PBA unveils 'Super Sunday'

GINO TIMBOON (Inquirer Correspon)
Lyon—Alaska vs. Talk 'N Text

By Maong R. Cuello

GINUTS DEMOLISHING:

There was no other way to describe how Alaska played last night as the Aces sent Talk 'N Text spiral from late in the second period of a 113-85 rout in the Araneta Coliseum to draw first blood in their PBA Fiesta Cup championship series.

The Aces owned a 17-point second quarter deficit and put on their shoes in the third to cruise to leads of as many as 22 points and win the series opener in a manner no one thought was possible.

Scott Ellis had a triple double with 22 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists, while Willie Miller scored 20 and Mike Cortes chipped in with 20 to the cure of the Alaska backcourt frustrated by Talk 'N Text counterparts.

Mac Cardona, who was hyped as the key to Talk 'N Text's OAC, was held by Miller and Cortes to just 13 points, a far cry from his 27.5 average in the playoffs.

"I'm shocked," Alaska coach Tim Cone later said. "I don't know how we were able to win this way with the kind of talent that they (Phone Pals) have.

"But we can't be satisfied with this victory. We have not gotten out of town."

The Aces grabbed a total of 68 rebounds compared to 39 by the Phone Pals and Ellis' 10 boards was just equal the entire Talk 'N Text output. Alaska had 25 total assists and 27 second-chance points compared to two for the Phone Pals.

"In the beginning, I thought we weren't mentally ready to lay it all on the line," said Cone, who went into the game handicapped by the absence of Jeffrey Cariaso because of injury. "And to tell you the truth, I didn't know that [in the first half] it was going to be one-sided."

The Aces trailed early in the second period, 29-36, but regained their composure quickly to end the first half already a point up, 45-44.

And that was all that Alaska needed, as the Aces came up with successive after the other in the third, including a 14-6 spurt that all but put the game to bed, 82-61, heading into the period's closing seconds.

Meanwhile, James Yap scored 27 points and Cyrus Baguio had 18 of his 22 in the fourth period last night to lead Red Bull to a 103-96 victory over San Miguel Beer for third place.

It was the second-third place finish in double-header history for Red Bull, which went through a lot of adversities the entire season, including the loss of its teammate, Enrico Villanueva to San Miguel in a controversial trade early in the season.

"Third place is not a bad finish, especially with what we've been through [this year]," coach Yeng Guiao said. "I'm very proud of our finish."

The next season, meanwhile, opens with a "Super Sunday" on Sept. 23 featuring all 10 teams playing simultaneously in different venues all over the country.

Commissioner Noli Eala hated that the board unanimously agreed to hold "Super Sunday" during a meeting on Wednesday night.

Kazakh spoils RP wrestler's medal attempt

By Jane Navarro

ROMEO CALDERON HAS THE CHANCE TO salvage a medal for the Philippines but Gino Ibarech (Bangsamoro) acknowledges the valiant effort yesterday at the start of the 2007 Asian Junior Wrestling Championships at the Mizu Aquino Stadium.

Calderon, who reached the medal round by sheer luck, yielded the first point of their Greco-Roman 50-kilogram match to Ashoyev en route to a 1-3 defeat.

Fourth-ranked and United States-based Reynaldo Tatado were also eliminated from the medal race in the boys' Greco-Roman 55 kg and 60 kg, respectively.

Ashoyev yielded to Bilar Hakimov of Uzbekistan, 6-0, and Tatado, who flew all the way from San Francisco, California, failed to handle Dalai's Zhang Bolingo, 6-3.

Ashoyev and Calderon rolling on the mat ended in the second round, prompting the judges to award the win to the Kazakh by superiority.

"He (Calderon) has a strong grip," the 15-year-old Calderon said for Ibarech.

Calderon also lost to Amon Endov of Kyrgyzstan, 3-0, in the preliminary round but made it to the medal round after Endov advanced to the finals against Iran's Imran Mohammadrahdi.

The gold-medal match was still being fought at presstime.

"I knew I could take him (Ashoyev) but I lost strength after two rough grappling and moving in the second round," said Calderon, a member of the national training pool for the past two years.

The son of a construction worker from Las Piñas City admitted that the technique of both Ashoyev and Endov were superior.

"Our opponents are strong, but my coach will go down fighting," said RP wrestling coach Jerry Talagtong. "This is a good opportunity for them to strengthen their skills."

Aplus METRO
Editor Boots C. Dipasupil

Father arrested for 3-year-old's murder

Mall surveillance camera printouts lead probers to suspect in daughter's slay

By Kristine L. Alave

THE FATHER OF A 3-YEAR-OLD GIRL HAS BEEN TAGGED BY THE police as the primary suspect in her murder.

The girl was found in a man-made ditch in Pasig City early this week.

Eastern Police District director Chief Supt. Lutgo Tinitalo said the 41-year-old assembly liaison worker, Jayson Noriega, 33, of Block 27 Lot 13 Phase 3A Kaingkaban, Bacolgaon, Ilocos.

The girl went missing on June 28. She was found floating in a ditch on Marcelo Avenue, Pasig two days later. The girl had a nail around in her left chest. Her skull was also broken, a police report said.

Dr. Emmanuel Aramon of the EPD Crime Laboratory said there was no evidence that the girl was sexually abused.

In an interview, Tinitalo said the suspect "confessed" to investigators.

The suspect underwent a drug test to determine if his wife under the influence of illegal drugs during the incident.

Police investigators showed Noriega printouts taken from a mall's surveillance cameras. Noriega and his live-in partner Marilyn Tagabat were shown with two children entering SM Centerpoint at about 4:34 p.m. on June 28.

At 9:02 p.m. Noriega was shown leaving the mall with a child, who was clinging to him. Another photograph showed the foot of a little girl. The camera caught Noriega at 9:05 p.m. entering the mall again but he was already alone, Tinitalo said.

Tinitalo said Noriega was separated from the girl's mother.

The EPD chief said the suspect admitted he got irritated by the girl's crying. "I didn't know what got into me. She didn't want to stop crying," he told police.

Noriega attempted to confront the girl before he gave the girl to a yet unidentified companion when he left the mall.

Tinitalo said they are investigating the whereabouts of the suspect's companion known only as "Ops."

Ownership of gun found beside dead trader still a puzzler

By Kristine L. Alave

THE SAGUION POLICE HIS-TILT JEFFS is saying the ownership of the pistol found near the body of Jose Reyes, son in-law of Mindoro Occidental Rep. Amelita Villarosa. EPD director Chief Supt. Lutgo Tinitalo said the information would help them determine if Reyes killed himself or if foul play was involved.

But he was more on silent details surrounding the 43-year-old businessman's death. He refused to say if the .9 mm pistol found near the body was the gun that killed Reyes. The crime laboratory has yet to release its findings.

Reyes, a Bikol resident, was discovered dead at about 9:30 p.m. Wednesday inside F-19 at the fourth floor of Valle Verde Mansion in Capt. Henry Javier Street, Brgy. Ugong, Pasig City, an apparent suicide, police said.

Bid Pasig City police chief Se

'Little Vietnam': Goodbye to all that

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA MAYOR ALFREDO LIM yesterday instructed policemen to make sure that residents of Quiapo's notorious "Little Vietnam" would not go back and rebuild their homes in the area.

Lim, who went to the area to oversee the demolition of shanties yesterday morning, directed police to watch and secure the area which gained notoriety because of cases of killings and alleged illegal drug activities.

As early as 5 a.m., hundreds of heavily armed policemen, including members of the Manila Police District Special Weapons and Tactics (MPD) and Explosives and Ordnance Division (EOD), were deployed in the area to keep the peace.

"The demolition was very peaceful," said MPD acting director Senior Supt. Danilo Abutazon. "There was no resistance from the residents because they were informed beforehand and they probably understood that this is for their own good."

Police, however, found drug paraphernalia in the area during the demolition.

Lim gave the go-signal for the eviction of informal settlers after a dialogue with religious and barangay leaders.

The mayor said he already relocated families of "Little Vietnam" during his earlier term as mayor. He claimed that the demolition would not only help in the drive against crime but also inspire the image of the Muslim community in the area.

The area along Actuyal Street got its tag in the 1970s during the Vietnam War.

"Little Vietnam" gained media attention last month following the discovery of the bodies of two women in a closet filled with cement. The victims were stabbed to death, police said.

Lim said victims of summary executions may have been dumped into a creek nearby.

The mayor said he has asked the Philippine Navy, the Coast Guard and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority to help clean the waterway so no illegal structures were dumped there.

PEACE Authorities let cross after shanties were torn down yesterday at Quiapo's once-feared "Little Vietnam." AFP/LYN RA

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INQUIRER

Lawyer allegedly helped client escape

METROBRIEFS

Bogus car theft

A COMPANY employee is now facing perjury charges for executing a bogus car theft in the Quezon City prosecutor's office.

Supt. Dindo Cruz, chief of the Anti-Carnapping Section, said Jose E. Bautista Jr. was also apprehended in connection with the theft of a Honda Civic car.

Bautista had reported to the QCPD Anti-Carnapping Section that June 8 that his car was stolen while parked in a parking area in Mandaluyong City.

However, Cruz said Bautista admitted to him that he executed the false report because he was afraid that his employer would scold him for losing the car.

Bautista was detained at the QCPD Station 10 in Fairview.

A first in Navotas

NAVOTAS CITY recorded its first carnapping incident for the year. A newly-bought luxury vehicle parked in its own driveway was stolen by armed men.

Barrel Dodd, in his duty-free shop, said the Mitsubishi Pajero was stolen at around 2 a.m. on Tuesday. Dodd, 32, said the vehicle was bought Wednesday but was already stolen by armed men.

Police said the vehicle was recovered in Caloocan City.

Valle Verde Club Mass

ROSARIO, Cavite — A mass will be held at the Valle Verde Club, Capt. Henry Javier Street, here, Office of Principal, during Sunday, at 10 a.m. The Holy Mass is part of the Feast, which is celebrated by some 1,000 Catholics every month at Valle Verde Country Club. The feast starts with the Holy worship, but no practice or rehearsal of the Sagrada Pentecostes to Miss Joan's by Sunday, and cleaning services. For details, call Cecile Lozada at 631-0115, 726-9881 or 726-3839.

Lawyer allegedly helped client escape

By Maryan C. Ortiz

A QUEZON CITY JUDGE HAS FILED criminal complaint against a lawyer for allegedly helping his client escape immediately after the promulgation of the latter's drug case.

Judge Ma. Theresa Dela Torre-Yadao of the QC Regional Trial Court Branch 86, said Manuel B. Estacio Jr. violated Article 156 of the Revised Penal Code when he helped his client Roy Llanos avoid serving his sentence.

Under article 156, a person may be imprisoned for helping a detainee escape.

In the complaint filed in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office on Thursday afternoon, Yadao said that on May 24 Llanos and Elmo Manoza were convicted of drug peddling.

Both were sentenced to life imprisonment and ordered to pay a fine of P500,000 each.

As the court personnel prepared the necessary commitment order for the transfer of the two to the Bureau of Corrections, in his "bid to exonerate" his client, Estacio "did or executed the said accused outside of the courtroom, taking advantage of the liquors of the court personnel and did guard-pointed near the door."

"[He] did so, who knew full well that accused Llanos was already under the custody of court after the promulgation of his bail...helped him escape and evade the service of his sentence," Yadao said in her complaint.

Arrest warrant

The judge said the bail bond a warrant for Llanos' arrest.

Court clerk Augustina Fuertes said in an affidavit affidavit, that she saw estacio, with his right arm around Llanos' shoulder, walking toward the door.

Ronnie Jabeni, court process server, said he noticed that Llanos was no longer in the courtroom when he returned to his post.

He headed to the lobby of the judicial hall and outside the building to look for him but he was no longer there," Jabeni added in his affidavit.

Carmen Soriano charged with estafa for bad checks

By John H. Aurelio and Santiago B. Alvarez

JOSEFA (JOSIE) DE ASIS ACTRESS Carmen Soriano is facing estafa charges for allegedly issuing rubber checks for the purchase of a house.

Soriano was charged with six counts of violation of the Anti-Bouncing Check Law or BP 22, according to a complaint filed yesterday morning in the office of Pasaleque City prosecutor Leonardo Bob Ignes Jr.

If found guilty, the star could face up to six years imprisonment. She could also be ordered to pay the amount of P313,500.

Jesus Alcuitas and her son Rhonda Tenorio said the singer issued bouncing checks amounting to P313,500 to cover her debts.

"The checks were issued to Rhonda over the year, but my client found out that funds were insufficient to cover the amount," Lawyer Romeo Umaya, for Alcuitas, said.

Soriano is the mother of actor Dingdong Dantes and the ex-wife of Congressman Manuel "Bolet" Agabas.

Asked for comment, Soriano said in her text reply to her mother Josie that she was "fed up with all the issues" and that she "can't take it anymore."

Soriano's son Dingdong Dantes, meanwhile, is also involved in a case filed by Alcuitas.

Dantes was charged with estafa for allegedly issuing a bouncing check worth P1.5 million.

Dantes, however, said he was not aware that the check he issued was a bouncing check.

He said he issued the check to Alcuitas because he was told that it was a guarantee that the money he borrowed from Alcuitas would be returned.

Dantes said he was willing to settle the case with Alcuitas.

He said he would be willing to pay Alcuitas the amount of the check.

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He said he would be willing to pay Alcuitas the amount of the check.

He said he would be

Dance of the nine virgins a yearly tradition in Makati

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE NINE DANCERS IN LONG PINK DRESSES were noticeable at the back of the mid-morning mass.

As they chanted and sang their prayers to the Virgin de la Rosa, most of the pair-to-pairs at Parokya Pentecostes in Makati City then tried to ignore the audience.

In this homage, the yearly prayer through dance and song is both a kind of penance and thanksgiving done by nine highly-reserved dancers in maroon gear.

Known as the Sala de los Anos (Dance of the Ladies), the dance is performed on June 29 and 30, feast days of the Biblical's patron saints Peter and Paul and the Virgin of the Rose or Virgen de la Rosa.

Introduced in the Visayas de Oeste region in 1718 midwives in Iloilo spread throughout the archipelago of the Virgen from Acapulco to the Sto. Peter and Paul Church in Pehlaneon.

But not just any girl can join the yearly hullabaloo origins are extraordinary celebrants.

"The dancers must be beautiful inside and out. Only virgins in purity in doing the penance because she will undergo rigorous training for the ladies," says Edna Estanislao, whose mother and sister were once dancers at the ball.

In the old days, the selected girls of good reputation were automatically from rich families were picked as dancers.

Not enough

But an unblemished reputation, physical beauty and beautiful desire to do the dance prayer are not enough. One of the requirements for new dancers, says the 70-year-old Estanislao, is to be virgin.

Dayan virgin. Kung may salot, maraming ilang taon nalagot na ka. A salot-dayat mahina ang loan representation," she adds. (The dancers has to be virgin. If she has a boyfriend, nothing bound scandals should have happened between the two of them. She should also be able to reach the high notes)

The reason behind the "virginity requirement" is that the nine dancers pass and give thanks to Santa Clara's mother, who is a virgin. Some of the old folks even believe that if there is heavy rainfall on the day of the feast, it means one of the dancers has lied about being a virgin.

Pledge

Estanislao was chalked by her mother to become a dancer, but was rejected because she couldn't hit the high notes and was a bit dark-skinned in her youth.

The dancers are usually aged 14 and below. The oldest now is in her mid-20s. Most of them had members, grandmothers and great-grandmothers who once also danced.

"It's become a tradition [t]ours stella dancer in the next generation," says Estanislao. The family in-fringe—or example—of travelling the dance are the Soriano and Ardion of Brgy. Pildera ten.

The present co-organizer, Linda Ardion-Reyes, who performed a pledge of lend-dancer.

Girls wanting to become part of the lush are screened as early as two years before the event. Training for the dance begins in April. The nine girls are taught the main, basic, and more pausal dance for more than a month of years.

The basic dance performed in the plaza in front of the St. Peter and Paul Church.

Ardion-Reyes says there are three parts to the basic—the choice or simultaneous chanting of prayers, the dance or singing of prayer, and the basic, a combination of prayers, dance and song.

The audience can "join" in the penance by pressing twenty-centavo dances, Estanislao says.

Clapping or bowing at the end of the Christian prayer-dance is a big no-no, even for tourists who want to show their appreciation.

"It's not for entertainment. It's not for the people who are watching. The dance is for patron saints," points out Bonnie Estanislao, Edna's nephew and lagoond for education and culture.

Both Estanislaos note that local interest in and awareness of the basic dance has declined over the years. Girls no longer want to join the ballet, and new setting their sights on beauty pageants.

But Ardion says the basic will go on even if there is no one left to watch. "Whether or not there is an audience, the ballet must go on. It is a rite of the present generation passes on the tradition, it will remain part of our heritage," says Bonnie.

This year, Ardion-Reyes' own niece, Michelle Ardion, was selected.

DANCERS of the basic dance are beautiful inside and out, according to longtime participants.

Former PNB employee charged with P2M theft

By Margaux C. Grilo

A FORMER EMPLOYEE OF A PHILIPPINE National Bank branch in Quezon City is facing charges of qualified theft after allegedly siphoning more than P2 million pesos from the account of a depositor.

Silvestre Fernandez, manager of the PNB BA branch, filed yesterday the charges against Rufus Antonio Salvosa in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

Fernandez alleged Salvosa, who worked at the PNB Cubao branch-entrance system, had been absent without leave since April 6, 2005.

In his complaint, the bank manager said Angelica Fernandez, a depositor, and her two daughters Annie Rhaie and Annie Rose, had eight passbooks under a joint account with the bank.

On April 14, 2005, Annie Marie used to withdraw P2 million from four of their accounts. But Fernandez said they found out that the accounts were either closed or linked to another client or did not exist in the Philippine International Savings Bank (PISB), which also is now defunct.

Annie Marie was asked to debit her withdrawals. She returned two days later with the four other passbooks with a total deposit balance of P627,750.34 for verification and updating. Again, bank officials discovered that the accounts had been closed.

Fernandez said an investigation showed that Salvosa withdrew the amounts and closed the accounts.

Fernandez added that the bank was compelled to restore P2,489,113.64 to the depositor's family after the police failed to satisfactorily close the criminal on May 25, 2005.

Owner of . . .

Turn to page 40

kept. Frank Ortiz said they were not riding on the possibility that Reyes was a means of fool play.

Police said Reyes' body was discovered by his friend Jocelyn Jesus Bernard de Venecia, the unit's owner. The victim had a single gunshot wound on the back, just below the chin.

A black Tag Lexus 4 now pulled with serial number EJ2501 85 and with one loaded magazine was recovered from the crime scene. A slug was recovered inside a pillow on top of Reyes' head.

Tours, Leisure & Chow

Where to Stop Where to GO

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

The Italian love affair with coffee

IN THE COFFEE IS THE NATIVE BUSHOUT and so one takes off to work or goes about one's business for the day before first having a cuppa. Espresso or Italian coffee was born in this land of coffee lovers. Italy is a country of coffee aficionados who will not tolerate an ex-tablelessness that serves bad coffee.

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For more information about Italian coffee and Segafredo, call 892.5811 or visit www.segafredo.ph. For franchise queries, e-mail ehipacio@liberty-group.com.

The Linden Suites awards front office associate

THE LINDEN SUITES recently cited Cecil Villaruz, a front office associate at the hotel, for her commendable performance in the hotel's guest satisfaction survey. Villaruz received 9.31 out of 10 in specific areas. The Service Excellence Award is almost becoming a tradition at the hotel's guest evaluation. Villaruz also brought home a gift certificate for a complimentary one night stay in a One Bedroom Suite with free

continental breakfast for two, one week of spa service, lunch at the Linden Suites restaurant Cafe Uno and

Broken promise over US green cards prompts suit

THE AMERICAN IMMIGRATION Lawyers Association and Thursday that it would bring a class-action lawsuit against the US immigration agency for refusing to accept thousands of applications for work-based permanent visas from highly-skilled immigrants who were encouraged by the government to apply.

According to spokesman Thomas Day, by officials and lawyers, the immigrants were caught in a confusion between the Two bill-ional bodies that control the immigration system—the State Department and the US Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The hopes of thousands of foreigners who have been working legally in the United States were completely ruined and then abruptly dashed as a result of the disagreement. They had responded last month to an announcement that permanent residency visas would be available, but on Monday learned there were none.

Federal officials said a mean-determining had issues from an effort by both agencies to evaluate huge backlogs of applications for permanent residency visas, known as green cards.

Immigration officials acknowledged that the effort was poorly handled. "Was there a lack of communication between us and the State Department?" said William S. Wright, a spokesman for the immigration agency. "Certainly."

The cyclonic started on June 12, when the State Department announced in a month bulletin that green cards would be available starting July 2 for applicants across the range of high-skilled categories. That was a signal to immigrants who have been working in this country on temporary visas that they would be able to apply to become permanent residents.

Thousands of immigrants, united to obtain certified documents, assemble employer sponsorship papers, take medical examinations and dispatch their applications. Many canceled travel plans so they could be in the United States when their applications arrived on July 2, as the law required.

But on Monday, the State Department announced that no more green cards were available. Instead on the immediate more well-educated, highly skilled legal immigrants, many of them doctors and medical technicians with long work experience in the United States. All had obtained federal certification that no American workers were available for the jobs they held. AP

31 bodies recovered from bus mudslide

ELOXOCHITLAN, MEXICO— Mexican rescuers dug out the bodies of 31 people on Thursday and used heavy excavators to remove a tangled mass of metal from the mountain town of Elxochitlan in the southern state of Puebla.

Rescuers also used bulldozers and other heavy machinery to drive away boulders, dirt and trees in search for more victims who were buried under the seven meters of mud after the hillside collapsed early on Wednesday.

"We don't expect to find anyone alive," local government spokesman Javier Lopez said in the state capital of Puebla.

The number of at least four children were pulled out as emergency workers dug up crumpled chunks of the bus, which was crushed on a winding road about 1.6 km before the tiny village of Tuzo-xapan.

Villagers near the landslide site had only scattered rocks had happened when the bus hit the hillside.

"Ah, get down there and it was all covered up and we realized something had happened because the bus doors were red," said coffee grower Bonifacio Cano.

Rescuers were hampered on Thursday by the flattened condition of the bus and concern that more of the hillside slide could give way.

"The part of the bus that we are working on is the driver's cab," Puebla Gov. Mario Marin said, adding that rescue workers would keep digging until they reached the last body. Reuters

MILITARY soldiers scrutinize the body of a motorbike victim in San Miguel Ilamochitlan, Mexico, on July 5. Rescuers digging through mud and rocks have recovered at least 31 bodies from a bus carrying 48 to 60 passengers which was buried on a rural road after a monsoon-storm gave way on July 4.

Israel offensive in Gaza leaves 11 Palestinians dead

JERUSALEM—AT LEAST 11 Palestinian militants were killed in air strikes and armed clashes during an Israeli army incursion into central Gaza on Thursday, Palestinian medical officials said. It was one of the bloodiest days for Hamas since it took control of the Gaza Strip a few weeks ago.

Hamas officials said their seven of the dead were members of its military wing, known as the Qassam Brigades, mostly from its Deir-nasily 20s. The Islamic Jihad faction said one of its men was among the dead. The affiliation of the other three was not clear.

Israeli military officials described the raid as a routine operation to root out "terrorist infrastructure" and search for weapons and women of men, Israel's Army Radio reported that dozens of Palestinians suspected of involvement in terrorism were being questioned in Gaza.

But Hamas officials accused Israel of stepping up its attacks as a demand of the conflict after a few days of violence quiet on the Gaza-Israel border. A Hamas spokesperson, Sami Abu Zuhri, said the Israelis were "on Israeli plots to end the resistance and to shake the government, despite its failures and achievements."

He was referring to the deposed Hamas-led government of Ismail Haniya, which was fired by the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, one of the rival Fatah faction, after Hamas' violent conquest of Gaza. Abbas appointed an emergency government to operate from the West Bank, but the Hamas leadership holds sway in Gaza and is trying to prove that it can improve conditions there.

Two squads of armed Palestinian men hit from the air as they were spotted approaching the ground forces, and five more armed Palestinians were hit soon, changes of fire on the ground, the army spokesperson said.

Dr. Moawiya Hassanein, director of the emergency medical service in Gaza, said 25 Palestinians had been wounded.

One of the wounded Palestinians was a cameraman for the Al Aqsa television channel video, who was filming the clashes. Al-Aqsa-sa television showed video-tapes of the cameraman lying wounded on the ground, then being shot twice in the legs from afar. AFP

After 6 months in Muslim rehab, woman still wants to be a Hindu

IMARI ALIBH, MALAYSIA—A Muslim-born Malaysian woman, who was held at an Islamic rehabilitation center for six months because she tried to live as a Hindu, also insisted Friday she will never return to her original faith.

The Islamic Religious Department in southern Malaysia's state of Perak said Revathi Masoosai, an ethnic Indian, in January and sent her to religious counseling after officials discovered she had married a Hindu man despite being born to a Muslim family.

Revathi was released from the rehabilitation center Thursday, and the opposition's High Court on Friday in an attempt to have her detention declared illegal.

Revathi, 29, claimed officials at the center tried to make her pray as a Muslim, wear a head scarf and eat beef, but she refused.

"Because of their behavior, I wrote them everyone away," she told reporters. "They say it's a school, but it's actually a prison."

Tajuddin, a lawyer representing the Islamic department, said Revathi entered in false because "is obsessed with love" after meeting her husband, but he said Revathi would be hopeful that the might still return to Islam.

Revathi was born in Indian Muslim parents who gave her a Muslim name, Siti Fathimah. But she claims she was raised as a Hindu by her grandmother and changed her name to Revathi.

Revathi married Suresh Vasu again in 2004 according to Hindu rites and gave birth to a daughter in December 2005. But the marriage was not legally registered because Muslims forbid to convert to Khan Beli. Revathi's official identification documents state she is a Muslim because Malaysians who are born as Muslims are legally barred from changing religion.

Islamic officials seized the couple's 16-month-old daughter from Suresh in March and handed the child to Revathi's Muslim mother.

Revathi said officials have ordered her to live with her mother and her baby for now and to continue counseling sessions. AP

French investigators raid former PM's home

PARIS—FRENCH INVESTIGATORS raided the home of former prime minister Dominique de Villepin on Thursday after fresh evidence came to light in a shiny stocks scandal targeting President Nicolas Sarkozy.

Judges looking into the so-called Clearstream affair were following up new evidence that Villepin may have sought to debase Sarkozy and scupper his bid for the presidency, just as officials said.

"It's the logical next step," one source close to the investigation said.

Judges Jean-Marie D'hoy and Henri Pons visited Villepin's flat in a fashionable part of the 17th arrondissement in Paris late afternoon, accompanied by police and a representative of the prosecutor's office, and questioned a second-and-a-half hour search of the premises.

The new evidence against Villepin was widely leaked to the press earlier Thursday and is based on documents retrieved from the computer of retired intelligence chief Philippe Rondot.

There appear to back up claims that in 2004 Villepin encouraged the looking of information falsely implicating Sarkozy, then interior minister, in a financial scandal, justice officials said.

The documents also suggest Villepin was active, with the encouragement of then president Jacques Chirac.

Both Villepin and Chirac have denied involvement in the affair, which revolves around stolen list of secret bankers at the Clearstream bank in Luxembourg. Sarkozy is reportedly benefited from illegal commissions from arms sales.

Judges in charge of the investigation are looking into allegations that Villepin and Chirac may have tried to secretly publish the list to wreck Sarkozy's presidential hopes. His relations ship with the two was at the time under great strain.

Chirac, who handed over power to Sarkozy in May, has refused to speak to the judges, arguing that in this matter he is still covered by presidential immunity.

Villepin, who also left office in May, on Thursday denounced the new "unfounded" allegations. AFP

Heat wave broils US West

BOISE, IDAHO—SWELTERING RESIDENTS across the West headed for lakes and rivers, seeking relief from high temperatures expected to set records through the weekend.

Some office workers were given the option to float on innertubes down the Boise River instead of sitting at staff's desks, with temperatures in Boise reaching 40 °C Thursday afternoon. Forecasters predicted a high of 42 °C on Friday—six degrees higher than the 38 °C recorded for the date set in 1941.

"I have a pale that high—108, 107, 109"F—it just feels hot," said Josh Overton, a carpenter who arranged the float trip for his digital marketing firm Mercenaries. "I'm going to keep a tube under my chair for the whole summer and whenever it gets too hot I'm going to escape."

But temperatures in most of the West were climbing to highs that authorities warned residents of southern Nevada, southeastern California and southwestern Arizona that outdoor activities could be dangerous except during the cooler early morning hours. Phoenix reached 46 °C; Baker, California, reached 52 °C.

At least one boy was found dead Wednesday evening in a pool as temperatures approached 38 °C in Cheshire, Idaho. He was found in the car for about five hours when parents by noticed him, and the boy's step grandmother was charged in his death, authorities said Thursday. AP

Poisoned shake closest CIA bid to kill Castro

HAVANA—THE CLOSEST THE CIA CAME TO killing Cuba's Fidel Castro was a 1960 attempt with a poisoned pill slipped by a secret agent who was ready to be slipped into a chocolate milkshake, a former Cuban intelligence chief said.

But the capsule stuck to the freezer where it was hidden in the cafeteria of the Havana Libre hotel and ripped open when the would-be assassin reached over to get the potion.

"That assassin was the closest the CIA got to assassinating Fidel," retired state security general Fabian Escalante told Reuters in an interview this week.

Castro, who seized power in a 1959 revolution that ousted Cuba into a communist state 150 km away from the United States, has survived hundreds of attempts on his life by his enemies, from exile embroiders to grenade attacks to baseball stadiums, Escalante said.

Some of the most imaginative cloak-and-dagger plots were the brainchild of the Central Intelligence Agency, he said.

They included poisoned cigars, an exploding shell meant to be placed in his favorite seafood, lethal bacteria and a scuba diving suit soaked in deadly poison.

Among early attempts devised by the CIA to discredit Castro was a plan to place chemicals under the floor that would cause his beard to fall out when he was in New York to speak at the United Nations in 1960.

Other that failed, the CIA planned to slip him a box of cigars tainted with LSD so that he would burn into fits of laughter during television interviews, said Escalante, author of a book that documents 167 plots against Castro.

But it was the CIA's plan to poison Castro with botulinum toxins in the early 1960s that came closest to succeeding.

The agency acknowledged last week for the first time that the plot to assassinate Castro was personally approved by the formerly administration's CIA director Allen Dulles.

The CIA declassified nearly 700 pages of secret records detailing some of its illegal acts during 25 years of covert assassination attempts, and domestic spying.

The agency's so-called "Family Jewels" detailed the initial efforts to get rid of Castro by using gangsters in a scheme with top mobsters, Salvatore Giancana and Santos Trafficant, the head of the Mafia's Cuban casino operations, to assassinate Castro. Giancana suggested poisoning him.

His pistol pills were provided by FBI to Juan Orta, identified as a Cuban official who had been receiving kickback payments from gambling interests, who still had access to Castro and was in a financial bind. But Orta got cold feet. Reuters

MEXICAN ICON FRIDA

Undated photo shows Frida Kahlo (right) hugging the former wife of Diego Rivera, Guadalupe Marin. Kahlo also was married to Rivera. Mexico's celebration of the centennial anniversary of the famed artist's birth this summer demonstrates she's a still creative force about, one of its most revered 20th century stars, a woman whose life and self-portraits have inspired books, plays and even a 2002 Hollywood film.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Casino

UK looks into Qaida link to bombing plot

LONDON—INVESTIGATORS ARE TRACING THEIR way through a maze of foreign links to a failed bomb plot in Britain to establish the possible role of al-Qaida's inner circle or its Iraqi arm, security sources said on Thursday.

Police and intelligence agencies were trying to determine how eight people arrested in a suspected failed blitzkrieg plot to bomb London and Scotland came into contact with each other.

They are from India, six from the Middle East and all had medical connections, including at least four doctors. Some have, or have charged in connection with two unexploded London car bombs and a botched attack on Glasgow airport in Scotland using a fuel-laden jeep which burst into flames.

All the overseas angles are being followed up," a security source said. "The significance of overseas associations is very high up on our list of questions. But we want answers to. Police would not confirm a CIDR report that they had found a mobile note in the wreckage of the jeep. While Prime Minister Gordon Brown has spoken of al-Qaeda links to the attempted bombings, the extent of those remains unclear.

Security analysts say it can be difficult to unravel intentionally without expelling local from seasoned militants. On the other hand, they say, aided by the deep disclosures of the latest plot, who is suspected is top security chiefs claimed no serious unified behind a series of data.

"My impression is that they (the Glasgow attackers) only had a Plan A, and not a Plan B," said Sergeant Tregall Campbell, a policeman who was first one of the suspect attackers. "The plan was to explode their vehicle and that they would go up with it." The British tabloid newspaper the Mirror reported that four of the suspects met in the university town of Cambridge in 2005, suggesting the group might have been formed there.

A security source said investigators still had an open mind on the questions of whether the suspects met, and because ends aligned, before or after they arrived in Britain. The families of two of them—Dr. Sabeel Ahmed and Dr. Mohammed Asha—have denied they were militants and voiced disbelief at the arrests.

Britain has seen a marked increase in al-Qaida-type plots since it joined the United States in invading Iraq in 2003.

An intelligence report leaked to the Sunday Times on April 1 said the country faced threats not only from "core" al-Qaida, based in Pakistan and Afghanistan, but also increasingly from al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI).

It said AQI networks were "active in the UK" and there was intelligence that AQI's Baghdad network in Iraq might be planning a large-scale attack on a Western target.

Analysts point a possible link between Dr. Ahmed, Bilal Abdulla and an Indian doctor, Kafeel Ahmed, who on Friday rode car newspaper advertisements condemning the arrest of suspected bomb attacks.

Several plots in Britain have been directed or inspired by al-Qaida figures abroad. Two of the four British suicide bombers who killed 52 people in London in 2005 were believed to have connected with members of the network in Pakistan.

Dhiren Barot, convicted last November of planning several attacks including one to blow up cars packed with explosives, had traveled to Pakistan to present the scheme to his "al-Qaida overlords." Six Muslims and, two others were found guilty last year of trying to detonate bombs on London and Glasgow airports.

In another British bomb trial, evidence emerged of contacts in Pakistan in 2003 between one of the plotters and a senior Iraqi al-Qaida leader, Abu al-Hadi, now held at the US military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The memo leaked to the Sunday Times said Hadi had urged a "large-scale" attack on Britain, shortly before Prime Minister Tony Blair stepped down. The London car bombs were found two days after he handed the premiership to Gordon Brown.

WORLD WONDER CONTENDER

Members of World Wildlife Foundation place a giant kite at over the statue of Christ the Redeemer at Corcovado mountain, to commemorate World Environment Day in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on June 5. Christ the Redeemer is among the leading contenders to be the new seven wonders of the world in a massive publicity stunt with votes already cast by more than 50 million people, organizers say. AP

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Pakistan cleric says he'd rather die than surrender

DEPUTY leader of the Red Mosque Abdul Rashid Ghazi

ISLAMABAD—A PAKISTANI cleric holed up in a besieged mosque in the capital declared Friday he would rather die than surrender, electronically opening the modern capital's deadly showdown between militants and security forces.

Abdul Rashid Ghazi, deputy leader of the pro-Taliban Lal Masjid, or Red Mosque, made the defiant statement on the fourth day of a bloody standoff that has already claimed 11 lives.

"We have decided that we can be martyred but we will not surrender. We are ready for our bodies to be offered but will not bow to them," he told the private Geo television network.

The government rejected a conditional surrender offer last night by Ghazi, whose brothers Abdul Aziz are captured on Wednesday while trying to flee the mosque dressed as clerics.

Heavy gunfire and explosions rocked the mosque early on Friday and there was no call for predawn prayers from the mosque's loudspeakers, underscoring the damage inflicted by security forces on the hitherto-fortified complex.

Troops backed by armored personnel carriers and helicopter gunships have been moving closer to the mosque and have thrown upwards of [illegible] to surrounding walls.

A mosque official, on condition of anonymity, said that there were casualties in the early Friday gunfire and the building has been hit by further mortar fire. Some security [illegible].

Hundreds of Islamic students are still inside the mosque compound, along with up to 50 "hostages" [illegible], Abdul Rashid said.

President Pervez Musharraf had earlier ordered that no militant action should be taken until women and children were out of the mosque, but reported that only six [illegible] and another ten except [illegible] officials said. AFP

Cracking myth that women talk more than men

By Donald G. McNeil Jr.

PEOPLE WHO TALK MORE? Men? Women?

Conventional wisdom: Women use 20,000 words a day more; 7,000. Some cultural lore, hubby intoned sad. Wife frustrated. 13,000 words to go, no takers. Read on.

But wisdom comes from popular 2006 book, "The Female Brain." Dave drinks. Skyler shouted.

Friday, study published Aug. most magazine. 500 subjects seven days, recorded everything. Women used 16,215 words per day, men 15,669. Statistically, even more.

But authors admit flaw: All 396 were college students—young, healthy, not [illegible] so used for upbeat announcement by Monday Night Football.

Despite flaw, says lead author, Matthias R. Mehl, University of Arizona psychologist, "Our paper goes to end the idea that the female brain evolved to be talkative and the male brain evolved to be extinct."

But last night mentioned in history study. After first printing of "Female Brain," author Louann Brizendine, began worrying that 20,000 vs. 7,000 figure was not intended by many researchers and removed it.

That was printings in 24 languages later, myth clings on anyway.

Real truth: Whole field maybe less hard science than squishy social politics, says librarian review included studies assuring men talked more, "further evidence of domination and exploitation of poor, poor women."

Finally, joke. Original male conversation divulged to prove myth remains pervasive.

Man: Study here says women talk twice as much as men.

Wife: Of course we do. We have to repeat everything to you.

Man: ... NYT

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Nadal fights way to quarterfinals /A30

SPORTS

San Mig-RP cagers bow to Jordanians

By Ernesto A. Gonzalez

TAIPEI—IT WAS SUPPOSED TO be a "study game" but Jordan ended up virtually taking the San Miguel-Pilipinas national quintet to school.

The Jordanians dominated the first half with supreme shooting and aggressive rebounding, then repelled repeated rallies by the Filipinos to score a 79-75 (at last) Friday and grab the lead in the 19th William Jones Cup international basketball tournament here.

With the Filipinos coming up with their worst first-quarter output of nine points, the biggest deficiencies were set by Jordan's biggest lead of 20-24 at halftime, then extend them for good.

The win over the Filipinos, who they will next meet in the preliminary round of the Nike Asia Championship in Japan starting late this month, lifted the Jordanians on top with a 4-1 record in this six-night single-round tournament.

Defending champion United States pinned a second straight loss on Indonesia, 91-73, at both teams tied for second at 3-2, along with Qatar, who defeated Japan, 96-68.

Although Mark Caguioa and Gabe Norwood brought the Filipinos within three points three times,

UAAP wars begin; Archers test 'mystery' Maroons

By Jasmine W. Payo

WITH AN AIR OF CONFIDENCE ABOUT THEM AND a determination to bury the ghosts of a harrowing slip-falling scandal, the La Salle Green Archers take the first step toward rebuilding a championship reputation when they take on the University of the Philippines Maroons today at the start of the 70th UAAP men's basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

"Our main concern is to be competitive with other teams," said Archers coach Franz Pumaren. "We're at most in top shape, we have the depths."

After serving a one-year suspension for fielding ineligible players, La Salle brings back transfer TY Tang, Rico Maierhofer, JV Casio and Chris Villanueva in an effort to reclaim its lofty standing in the collegiate series.

The Archers end the Maroons' outlook at 2 p.m., right after the 1 p.m. opening tilt.

Traditional powers the Ateneo University Tamaraws, headed by nine coach Glenn Capacio, will test its new roster against the Far Eastern University Bulldogs at 4 p.m.

Ranked as this season's top team, the Archers sport the final return by recruiting Greek-Serbian Marko Simonovic and Indonesian Ferdinand as imports.

Pumaren said, however, that the Archers, who ruled two preseason tournaments, will be up against an unlikely opponent.

"We don't get to see UP [at the preseason tournaments]," said Pumaren. "We don't know what to expect against them, so we're just preparing for possible scenarios."

The Maroons are expected to rely on veterans Michael Fjare and the sophomore quartet of Rabbit of the Bay Newsbyte, Migs de Asis, Regie Saycocol and Mastro Jesus.

Coach Joe Lipa will call the shots again for the Maroons, who shortened a big blow when versatile point guard Dharlo de Cruz decided to forego the final year of eligibility to turn pro.

But among the key additions to the Maroons' lineup are former Ateneo high school point guard Mike Cantleon and PEU junior standouts Joe Rivera, Mark Lopez and Lemuel Mendoza.

The MJ Bulldogs, tabbed as the year's dark-horse, boast a seasoned roster led by Edwin Bawer, Jonathan Fernandez and transfer Enrique Lingan.

"The all-veteran variant not very well for us, especially for our bench players who needed reposition," said coach Manny Dandan.

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
1 p.m. — opening ceremonies
1:30 p.m. — La Salle vs UP (M)
4 p.m. — Ateneo vs FEU (M)

Knights, Cards drop big bombs

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TWO WINS INTO WHAT IS SHAPING TO look like a promising campaign, the Letran Knights humbly looked satisfied. Until yesterday, that is.

The Knights finally humiliated the defenseless Cardinals in the aftermath, blending the San Sebastian drop-dry in the second quarter en route to a 73-61 blowout and a share of the lead, pronto day in the NCAA men's basketball at the Araneta Coliseum.

"That is the kind of game I want, defensively," said Letran coach Louie Alas, who authored the team's distrust of holding down opponents to 60 points or less each game. "I'm very important in the way my rookies played defense. This is what we have been preparing for all summer."

The Knights, who gave up at least 80 points in their first two wins, tied idle San Beda at 2-0.

That triumph served as a prelude to another breakthrough win—Mapua's 86-80 decision over Jose Rizal that gave the Cardinals their first victory in the tournament after three losses.

Sean Ee and Hall Durand hit six straight free throws in the last 20 seconds to seal the outcome.

Jose Rizal led most of the way but succumbed to two crunch finals, sending Mapua to the line 53 times off 28 fouls. The Cardinals took advantage and hammered in 30 free throws. JRU belter 1-0.

The Stags, on the other hand, suffered their second straight loss against a lone victory but coach Jorge Gallent didn't wait for the final buzzer to show his displeasure at the game.

Gallent, a multititled coach in the Philippine Basketball League, was tossed off the game after getting slapped with two technical fouls in the last four minutes with Letran leading, 53-44.

TH scores
Rizal Game
SCHEDULE (9)—Ayol 23 Mangahis 16, Asoro 10, Ilao 8, Bautista 4, Alpapar 2, Lalican 2, J. Fabiano 2, Tabuena 2, Salinas 2, Del Rosario 1, Serrano 1, C. Fabiano 1, Campos 1.
SAN SEBASTIAN (61)—Aquino 11, Quiazon 11, Ong 9, Abuan 7, Aquino 6, Bagtas 5, Valladolid 4, Delgado 4, Cuenca 2, Esperanza 1, De Real, De Leon, Cruz, Cruz 0.
Quarters: 19-16, 37-31, 49-38, 73-61
Second Game
MAPUA (86)—Ebon Mills 30, Durand 18, Lo 14, Jacinto 13, Jimenez Hernandez 6, Ramos, Gallentes, Dominguez
JOSE RIZAL (80)—Wilson 20, Virgen 16, Agas 11, Pascua 8, Alvarez 7, Samad, Cardenas 6, Cagayan 5, Kampling 4, Go 2, Abad 2, Mendoza, Quiambao, Ramirez, Lumbres
Quarters: 19-18, 42-36, 57-50, 80-86

JOSE Rizal's John Wilson is dispossessed by Mapua defenders in yesterday's game. The Cardinals prevailed. ALAN TANGCAY

Duncil, two ex-pros join tryouts for SEAG team

By Jasmine W. Payo

FORMER UAAP STANDOUT JOJO DUNCIL OF the University of Santo Tomas and two ex-pros showed up in yesterday's tryout for the national team at the Rizal Canvas Mandaluyong.

Duncil, who recently opted to forego his final year of collegiate eligibility to turn pro, and former PBA players Aris Montero and Lervin Ildefonso joined the auditionees of the squad set to compete in the Southeast Asian Games this October in Thailand.

But Duncil, the Finals Most Valuable Player in the 2007 Fiesta Conference last year, said he's still weighing his options.

"I'm not yet sure [if I'll join the PBA draft this August]. I just want to do it for now," he said.

Despite missing the first day of tryouts last Wednesday, Duncil was endorsed by national basketball coach Chot Reyes and Barbosa Gastronomy manager Dante Bedjeda, who's tasked to oversee the SEAG team selection.

"We're glad [Duncil] joined our scrimmages today, at least we have seven raw players," said Bedjeda. "The most recent players who have performed in international competitions are Montero and Ildefonso."

Montero, who donned the national colors in the 1990s, was among the respondents to Bedjeda's earlier invitation to retired PBA players who can provide experience to the young squad.

Other new faces in the tryouts were Jhorge King's Bongga Thomas, Virginia's JP Adamos and Christian Cosme-Lord Firebird Gino's Abel Mina.

Hardwood Centre, which recently captured its third straight PBL title, also sent in core players including back-to-back PBL MVP Jason Castro, two-time Finals MVP Chito Custodio, Beau Belga, Jeworski Leo, Chad Alonzo and Ryan Sealza.

Wide-open battle seen as NCAA volley gets going

GAMES TODAY
(San Juan Gym)
Men — 10 (Emilio vs Perpetual, 12 (Lyceum vs Letran, 2 (JRU vs CSB), 4 (PU vs EAC)

WITH LAST YEAR'S CHAMPION PHILIPPINE Christian University serving a one-year suspension, expect a wide open race in the 82nd NCAA volleyball tournament which fires off today at the San Juan College gym.

The Lyceum Pirates, runner-up to CSU and the Generals to succeed the Dolphins as champions, tackle host Jose Rizal University at 12 noon.

PCU was banned from playing this season after one of its players in the high school basketball squad was found guilty of identity switching.

The junior, women and senior teams of St. Benilde and Perpetual-Help open their duels at 9 a.m., after brief opening rites.

Jose Rizal, the back-to-back junior and women's defending champion, opens its title retense bid on Thursday against San Beda.

The Lady Stags, the winningest NCAA women's team with 15 crowns, is coming off a season upheaval in the Shaheen's V-League tournament.

However, they would play without Aiza Maizo-ajan for at least one month. The 2006 MVP underwent arthroscopic knee surgery operation, forcing her to miss the V-League finals. —Romulo S. Aurelio

'Stack' comes to . . .

Stackhouse said. "But obviously it has been working with [the two] the European player. [Jason] coaching up with the NBA players."

Stackhouse cited his teammate, Most Valuable Player Erick Strobtkowski, as the face of international league scouts.

"I think he boosts an impression to all kids in Germany," the 12-year NBA veteran said.

In his three days visit, Stackhouse will conduct skills training demonstrations, share tips on the game and interact with local fans.

Showcasing the Larry O'Brien NBA championship trophy, has also been the highlight of the company's activities since it began activities such as a three-on-three challenge, a video dunk contest and a three point shootout.

SPORTSWATCH

BEST clinics begin

(MVM) MAN Mila Mill for Sports Fair Coo-ong (second from right) fields questions on the 2 to Mila Marathon's Davao City leg during yesterday's press conference at the Davao's Restaurant in the city. With him are (from left) Manila Phils. Inc. marketing promotions specialist Anne Marithelle Rapig, national race director Rudy Biscocho and local organizer Ms. Sol. About 10,000 runners are vying in tomorrow's race which will be flagged off in the city's Rizal Park.

40 bidders salivate

Key PCAP tilt today

LPC 3-cacker is on

DLSU nips Ateneo eleven in Razon Cup

Pacquiao-Barrera on Solar

SOLAR SPORTS HOLDS THE RIGHT TO air the expected blockbuster fight between reigning International Boxing Federation super featherweight champ Manny Pacquiao and Marco Antonio Barrera, which takes place in October at the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas.

The deal, announced yesterday, was part of a multi-fight package agreed upon between Solar and Pacquiao's MP Productions, which holds all Philippine television rights of the reigning American Boxing Writers' Association Fighter of the Year.

Solar Sports, which airs on cable, tied up with giant network GMA-7 and RPN-9 to broadcast the fight on free TV.

The second fight between two of the most charismatic names in the lower weight divisions has a Las Vegas schedule of Oct. 6 (Oct. 7 in Manila). The first fight in 2003, which ended with Pacquiao's dazzling 11th-round knockout of Barrera, thus catapulted the Filipino to worldwide fame, was held in San Antonio.

"We are very pleased that we managed to get all the rights on Manny's future bouts," said Solar Entertainment CEO Peter Cheeling.

Solar Entertainment president Wilson Tieng added, "It's not only about the right to be called the home champions. It's also about continuing our commitment to bring the best sports shows to Filipinos."

"We all know naman na kung gaano kapopular ang laban ni Manny," said Solar Entertainment VP for broadcast Ralph Sison.

Pacquiao may have won the first fight, but Barrera may have the last laugh. Ian Barrera is his son.

After losing to Pacquiao, Barrera clawed his straight wins, including one via a majority decision against Mexico rival and fellow Mexican Erik Morales.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

BATTLEFIELD: The Philippines' Roman Cabbuena (in red) goes pinned by Zhanpolat Ashenov of Kazakhstan during their match in yesterday's Asian Junior Wrestling Championships. Story on Lens Sports on A5   ALEX NINAL, AFP

Del Mundo tops US chess event, earns FM title

US MASTER ANTON PAOLO DEL MUNDO scored seven points in nine rounds to cop first place in Section 1 (Under 2400) of the Pinoy Open chess tournament last Thursday at the Alley Forge Auditorium and Convention Plaza, King of Prussia in Pennsylvania.

Del Mundo, a former chess national and now a software engineer in the US, registered a performance rating of 2503 to head four others tied with him for first place.

He also has a 66G rating increase of 29.1 points, thus pushing his FIDe rating from 2296 to 2325 and making him a FIDe Master.

Sharing first place with Del Mundo were Haitian International Master Mikhail Gurevitch, Mongolian FM Boghdanov Enkhee and American FMs William Morrison and Ian Vigdor. They earned about $5,000 each.

Paolo's dad Isidro tied for fourth place in Section 5. **Marlon Bernardino, Contributor**

Ozamiz nips Spring Oil 5

OZAMIZ CITY—MELFRED MENFOLD drained a 3-pointer with 1.2 seconds left to lift defending champion Ozamiz past Tegaty Spring, 79-77, Thursday night in the 2007 Spring Cooking Oil NBC Invitational Cup basketball tournament at the Sen. Angel Medina gym here.

Ozamiz's victory avenged an 84-83 loss to Tegaty on June 11 in Midsur City and enabled Mayor Reynaldo Nesplang's Cebu Zhiste reigning co-top the elimination round at 12-4.

Tegaty dropped to 10-4 and a second place tie with cello Firefly Bigas in the tourney conducted by Indiera Linis. Spring Cooking Oil, Silver Pride, Sol Miguel Beer, Cable, Basketball TV and Silver Estate Channel.

Trailing 75-77, Ozamiz went to Jumpin, who scored his fourth two-in-one-many attempts, to hit the lid of MNC president Nathaniel "Tat" Dalilla's and Augusto Cliff Montesa-owned Indonesia Cooking Oil Masters team comprising over the champs.

Tegaty-Spring was locked in another crucial match with Mayor Antony Go's Pagadian Dipfor-on pursuance yesterday.

Jumpin finished with 13 points to lead the draw from Marlon Bautis and Bimer Dindo, who had 15 and 17, respectively.

The score:

OZAMIZ 26—Jumpin 13, Lucas 11, Jumpin 2, Mendoza 6, Antonio 4, Gatchalian 12, Bautis 2, Alvarez 5, Lobigan 2, Lopez 1, Tampoco 0, Alabanza 0.

TEGATY SPRING 25—Tandayan 10, Ilo-Ilo Castro 11, Albertson 10, Jimenez 19, Tajonera 0, Payne 7, Roberts, Sycamore 6, Perez 2, Lingkan 2, Dalilla 0.

Quarter: 15-14, 35-33, 55-54, 79-77.

Tough track for Asian Supercross

MOTOCROSS ENTHUSIASTS ARE IN for a treat when the second round of the 2007 FIM-UAM Asian Supercross Championships unveils at the Sun Track Circuit in Upper Bicutan, Taguig City on July 22.

The Supercross track will "ride a big bang in Pasay, Princess City in March with defending champion Anon Thepthi of Thailand pulling off eyewatering moments in the two-hours-of-the-hour 125-event.

Chino Apodaca the country's top rider recovered from a sluggish start to salvage third place behind teammate Rom Sciortino.

An inspiring Pinoy, a 125-year-old motocross racer, made it a double story for the Thais by prevailing in the Amo Koo event. Indonesian Edison Hendra rounded up second while Filipino Amores Bernal landed third.

The Sun Track event has drawn close 120-er and Rider riders from Japan, Thailand, New Zealand, Indonesia, China, Hong Kong, UAE, Brunei and India.

The event is sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association and promoted by Sarmac Moto. It is being supported by Taguig City Mayor Freddie Tinga. For details, e-mail sarmac@yahoo.com or call (0917) 8992583.

P1-M poker finals at Airport CF today

THE GRAND FINALS OF THE PHILIPPINE POKER Tour (PPT) Million Peso Hold'em Championship will be staged today at Airport Casino Filipino Pavilion.

Registration starts at 1 p.m. and only begins at 2:30.

The winner of the event will join the elite group of poker millionaires that includes inaugural champion Derek Bautista and Chris Parker, last year's winner.

PPT chief and CEO Nick Santiago said the champion will have an option to choose to join an all-expense paid vacation in Los Angeles and a ticket to the prestigious "Legends of Poker" tourney in August.

Otherwise, the champion gets P1 million in cash, prize and the coveted championship crown.

Winners of the satellite tournaments are expected to see action. Those who failed to qualify can still join the finals by paying the tournament fees of P10,000.

Government Warning:
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SPORTS

Nadal fights way to quarterfinals

Venus still in orbit; Federer match postponed by rain

WIMBLEDON, ENGLAND—EFRAIME a two-set deficit despite playing on a fourth consecutive day, Rafael Nadal came back to beat Mikhail Youzhny in five sets Thursday and reach the Wimbledon quarterfinals.

Nadal, the 2006 runner-up, picked up early service breaks in each of the final three sets to win, 3-6, 7-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

"After the first two sets, the score (line) was maybe (play) my best game on grass in my life," Nadal said.

Venus Williams had a much-easier time Thursday, playing outstanding tennis to reach the semifinals by beating No. 5 Svetlana Kuznetsova, 6-2, 6-4.

Williams will earn Jane French Open finalist Ana Ivanovic, who defeated No. 14 Nicole Vaidisova, 4-6, 6-2, 7-5.

Ivanovic saved three match points and beginning with the last one, won 11 of 13 points. That sets her on her way to taking the match's last four games. It ended when Vaidisova double-faulted for the ninth time.

"I know I could do it," Ivanovic said. "I know I could make a comeback. I got good shots and be aggressive and more forward and put pressure."

Play was suspended for the day with fourth-time defending champion Roger Federer and No. 23 Juan Carlos Ferrero still in the first set of their quarterfinal. Federer was serving at times at 9-9.

No. 3 Andy Roddick and No. 11 Richard Gasquet took the court to warm up but never started.

Nadal, one of only three players to have beaten Nadal twice in the last year, struggled midway through his match with pain in his lower back.

He called for a trainer after losing the third set. Lying on his stomach, the Venezuelan got his lower back massaged. After the fifth game of the fourth set, he was again on the ground with the trainer stretching his back.

"Big disbalance between left side and right side in my back," Youzhny said. "When I play a lot, three, four and more and I start to feel pain."

Nadal's first-round match, which was supposed to begin Saturday, didn't finish until Wednesday.

The three-time French Open champion failed to convert his first match point Monday, and had to wait until Wednesday to get another because of rain delays.

Nadal is trying to become the first man to win the French Open and Wimbledon in the same year since Bjorn Borg in 1980.

In the quarterfinals, the second-seeded Gasquet will face No. 7 Tomas Berdych, who beat Jonas Bjorkman, 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (6), 6-0.

No. 10 Marcos Baghdatis, who lost to Nadal in last year's semifinals, advanced by beating No. 6 Nikolay Davydenko, 7-5, (5), 7-6 (5), 6-3 in the fourth round. He will next play No. 4 Novak Djokovic, who beat 2002 champion Lleyton Hewitt, 7-6 (3), 7-6 (2), 4-6, 7-6 (3). AP

ROGER Federer returns to Juan Carlos Ferrero in one of the few points the two played in a rain-stopped match. AP

DJOKOVIC ... at

IVANOVIC ... serves

AT&T NATIONAL

Struggling Tiger seven shots down

SEVERNA, MARYLAND—(BOTTOM) Recent tournament for the first time, Tiger Woods begins[illegible] first two holes.

There came the rain.

It didn't get much better after that. After a brief delay, Woods seemed to be a much more gracious host than he planned. By the time his second nine were in the books, he had missed a 2-foot tap-in, hit a rinse in the face with a divot and caused his partner to thanked and lost his bag several times.

On Thursday scheduled at the inaugural AT&T National included seven buoys in a 3-over round of 73, tied for 77th place and seven shots behind first co-leaders Vijay Singh, Jim Furyk, KJ Choi, Joe Ogilvie and Stuart Appleby.

Woods parred 14 times, including three three-putts, and he missed every attempt longer than 8 feet.

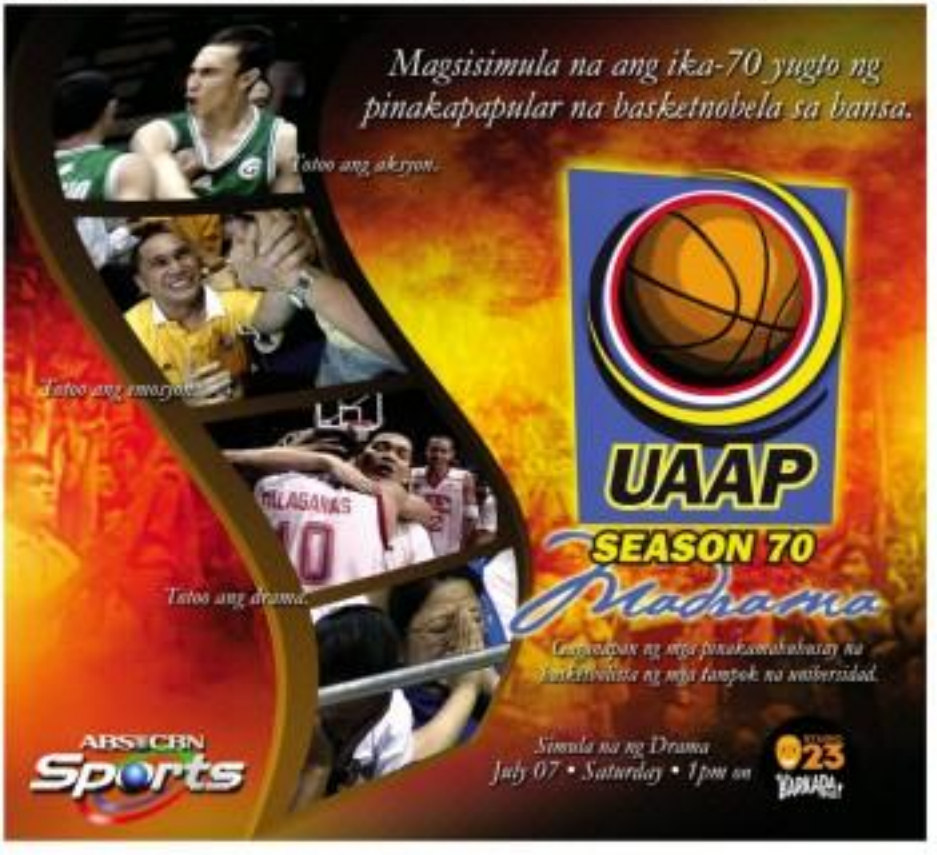
"It's one of the worst putting rounds I have had in years," Woods said. "I'm going to have to figure out something for (Friday) because, evidently what I'm doing is not even close to being right. I've got to fix it. I've got to get back in this tournament."

Woods hadn't played since finishing second at the US Open three weeks ago, and he said he still had the clear game of Oakmont in his mind on a damp, humid day at Congressional Country Club.

The leaderboard is an eclectic mix of styles, ranging from the long-hitting Singh to older, big-top players such as 51-year-old Fred Funk and 47-year-old Corey Pavin, who are both one under all the lead.

Choi, who started on the back nine, had to overcome bogeys at Nos. 3 and 5, his 12th and 14th holes to get his 68. Singh, who also started at No. 10, had his four bogey cards—at the par-4 18th, he finished No. 9 par in 4 strokes.

Appleby closed with three straight birdies. AP



BUSINESS

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Forex reserves hit $26.4B in end-June

BSP says level is near high-end of gov't target for '07

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S GROSS international reserves rose further in June to an historic high of $26.4 billion as foreign capital continued to flow into the economy, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

The GIR, or the amount of foreign currencies and foreign-currency denominated assets held at the central bank, was at a previous all-time high of $25.9 billion in May.

The BSP said the latest GIR figure already kept the country close to hitting the high-end of the full-year target of between $26 billion and $28.4 billion.

Monetary officials said the monthly rise in the GIR was due to inflow in flows of foreign investments, remittances by overseas Filipino workers, income from investments abroad, and the central bank's earnings from its foreign exchange operations.

The BSP said the GIR in June was equivalent to 4.9 months' worth of imports of goods and payments for services. This marked a slight improvement

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CrossWinds Tagaytay

Ayala Land to raise ₱1.3B from rights offering

By Elizabeth Sandoz-Lanuza

PROPERTY GIANT AYALA LAND INC. aims to raise roughly P1.3 billion from a stock rights offering of 11.03 billion common shares.

Proceeds from the stock rights will be used to fund ALI's various projects, sources added.

ALI's board also approved the increase in the company's authorized capital stock to P21.5 billion from P10.95 billion. The new capital will consist of 20 billion common shares at P1 per value of P1 a share and 1.5 billion preferred shares at P1 a share each.

ALI is calling a special stockholders' meeting on Aug. 28 to ratify the capital increase.

Early in the year, ALI disclosed its aggressive plans to expand development into the residential, shopping mall, office and hotel businesses to take advantage of the property boom.

ALI officials had said the company has finalized a P70.2 billion budget for projects in 2007, of which 55 percent or P38.9 billion will go to 27 housing projects in between bedtime pm. This is the highest number of residential projects it is launched in the company's entire history and will generate growth in the number of units offered in 2008, ALI president Jaime Ayala said.

ALI will venture out further north of Manila such as in Bulacan and Pampanga. It will also launch projects in Tagaytay City, Cavite, Laguna, Cebu, Antipolo, Rizal and Iloilo.

Shopping centers will account for 24 percent or P13.9 billion of the company's budget for projects this year. The company has launched the 195,000-square meter "Fairview," which is directly linked to the MRT-North Avenue station in Quezon City.

ALI is also forging into the burgeoning retail market in Batangas as it wants construction this year of a P2 billion mall in Laguna City.

The Batangas mall will sit on a 9.3-hectare lot and will offer 70,000 square meters in gross leasable space.

Also adding to ALI's leasable spaces this year is the first phase of Ecocentrik 2.1 in Makati to be opened toward the end of the year and the first phase of Arcovia City in Pasig set to debut in October/November.

New shopping centers will add 250,000 square meters of gross leasable space to ALI's portfolio.

ALI is also redeveloping the Ayala Center's first mall and, once completed standing up new hotels at the Glorietta area to pave the way for new office spaces for business process outsourcing firms as well as links to new hotels outlined by tenants.

ALI earlier said it would develop a chunk of Ayala Center in the Makati business district into a luxury hotel complex in partnership with a Southground hotel and resort management company.

FPHC buys out Meralco partner

THE TAKEOVER BY FIRST PHILIPPINE Holdings Corp. (FPHC) of First Philippine Infrastructure Development Corp. (FPIDC), a major shareholder of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), is seen to set the tone for getting the government's stake in the power distributor, stock analysts said.

FPHC has agreed to buy the 40.5 percent stake held by Spain's Ferrovial International S.A. in joint venture firm FPIDC for ₱28.6 billion, subject to undisclosed conditions, FPHC said in a disclosure.

The acquisition is expected to be executed in 2008.

The balance of 60 percent in FPIDC is held by FPHC.

FPIDC owns 220.08 million shares in Meralco or 32.46 percent of the company's outstanding stock.

Sources said FPHC plans to finance the acquisition through its cash holdings and additional borrowings. Sources could not immediately disclose how much FPHC will borrow as it is yet to be decided.

Ricardo Puig, head of research at Trendy Securities, said FPHC's buyout translates to roughly ₱1.25 a share, offering a 12 percent premium over Meralco's last closing price at ₱11.13 a share.

The national government is selling its 12 percent stake in Meralco and is targeting other government agencies to unload their holdings jointly including pension funds and other government entities. the government holds 29 percent in Meralco.

At ₱1.25 a share, the sale of 322 percent in Meralco could fetch as much as ₱15.09 billion. The deposit of the seller 29 percent could generate for government roughly P36.47 billion.

FPHC had said it was interested in the government's 29 percent stake in Meralco. FPHC holds directly and indirectly 26 percent in Meralco.

"We're watching it. We're watching it closely. There are a lot of variables in the air. My deal basis if the government will sell its full 29 percent but we're looking at it," FPHC president Elpidio Ibañez had said.

"Whatever the [government] could be ideal [with the sale]. That's why we have to watch the developments who the buyers are," Ibañez said when asked what would make FPHC keen on bidding for the stake.

Meralco distributes electricity to about 5 million homes and businesses the country and is valued at around ₱1.39 billion. Bloomberg/The Business

Shares close 1.14% lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.14 PERCENT lower yesterday as investors took profits from Thursday's record breaking run, with clients to political concerns weighing on sentiment, dealers said.

The composite index lost 42.46 points to 3,704.84 after trading between 3,707.20 and 3,922.41.

The all-shares index fell 24.30 points to 2,411.34.

There were 87 losers and 46 gainers, with 16 stocks unchanged.

Volume rose 5.09 billion shares worth ₱4.2 billion.

Investors had turned cautious because prices were already "unconditionally" high, said Ameen Lugo of Philippine Global Equities.

Some analysts said domestic political concerns might also have prompted investors to lock in profits and stay on the sidelines.

Headlines in local newspapers were mostly about the pending verdict over charges of grave corruption against former President Joseph Estrada.

But others said the market was probably just taking a breather and looking again for a strong base before testing new highs, while the outlook for the economy still looks solid.

Top-traded stocks Land fell 26 centavos to ₱27.75. The property developer announced late Thursday that its board had approved a stock rights offering of up to 11 billion preferred shares to all stockholders.

Shares in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., the biggest Philippine company by market capitalization, were down by ₱1.50 at ₱2,726.

Fist Philippine Holdings Corp. fell 50 centavos to ₱90.00, giving back gains made earlier in the session.

The company announced last Thursday that it would raise its stake in Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) to become the largest shareholder of Iglesia ni Cristo's debt with ₱20 billion.

Meralco's shares, which only Filipinos can trade, lost a peso to ₱111 but 46 billion shares, which can be owned by Filipinos and foreigners alike, is traded again to ₱111.

Lugo said: "The attraction for First Philippine Holdings is still attractive, but Meralco seems to be overstretched." AFP

NOTICE AND AGENDA

OF

ANNUAL MEETING OF REGULAR MEMBERS

Please be informed that the Annual Meeting of the Members of the Subic Bay Yacht Club will be held on Saturday, 21 July 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the SBYC Clubhouse, Rizal Highway corner Burgos Street, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City. Members' registration begins at 9:00 a.m.

The agenda of the Meeting shall be as follows:

1. Proof of Notice
2. Proof of Quorum
3. Reading and approval of previous minutes
4. Report of the Commodore
5. Appointment of External Auditor
6. Ratification of the acts and resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management in the previous year's
7. Amendment of Article V (Officers), Article VII Sec. 1 (Meetings of Regular Members), Article IX (Suspension and Expulsion) Article XIII (Miscellaneous Provisions) of the By-Laws
8. Election of Directors
9. Adjournment

The Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held immediately upon adjournment of this Annual Meeting of the Members.

(Sgd.) ATTY. CANDIDO R. FLOR
Corporate Secretary

Gov't expenses cut by ₱42B in H1, low rates cited

By Michelle V. Rosca

Lower-than-expected spending helped rein in deficit

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT spent P42.9 billion less than what it programmed in the first half, thus helping rein in the budget deficit, according to preliminary data from the Department of Finance.

According to the fiscal program for the year, the government should have spent P589.2 billion in the first semester for operations, infrastructure, social services and other expenditures.

But the actual wound showed that it had spent only P547.4 billion during the period.

This was attributed mainly to the drying pots and the low interest rates, which reduced the government's debt servicing costs.

As a result, the budget deficit in the first half was estimated to have stood at just P37.7 billion.

And the government spent to programmed, then the deficit—the difference between revenues and expenses—would have reached P79.6 billion, exceeding the full-year target of P63 billion.

The cut in expenses, however, failed to make up for the anemic tax collection during the period, thus the budget deficit is of four exceeded the limit of P21.3 billion.

Both the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, the government's two largest revenue earners, failed to meet their respective collection goals.

But Finance Secretary Margarito Teves stressed that the under-spending in the first half was not deliberate.

He denied that the government had directed its line agencies to restrict spending because the government could not meet its revenue collection targets.

Teves said the government preferred to spread its programmed outputs difficulty in meeting revenue goals.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said, however, that some government agencies were having difficulty spending their budget allocations due to various factors, including tedious procurement processes.

Economic managers of the Arroyo administration earlier urged government agencies to increase spending, especially for infrastructure, to make the country a par with its neighbors in terms of attracting foreign investments.

The amount spent for infrastructure accounts for less than 3 percent of the country's gross domestic product, compared to the average of 5 percent for neighboring countries.

Asahi goes for Asian export market

By Rocco FM. Domingo

ASAHI GLASS PHILIPPINES (AGPH) said it had taken extra steps to meet and exceed as it prepares to cater to buyers in Pang. City, one of the group's export hubs in Asia.

Rene Amante as AGC Flat Glass Philippines or AGPH, the company is the only subsidiary of Tokyo-based Asahi Glass Co. Ltd. (AGC) producing solar glass covers in Asia.

Solar glass covers are used in making flat plate solar collectors, which convert solar energy into electricity.

"We are producing solar glass covers at full capacity of 200,000 square meters monthly," said AGC president Emmanuel V. Go in an interview.

Go added that AGPH was also churning out other products as capacity volumes, including float glass and figured glass and interior that are needed in various industries like construction and automotive.

Through AGC's globally-anchored production scheme and support offshore in the United States, Belgium, Japan and others, AGPH is to produce specialty products such as tinted glass, fire-resistant glass, tempered glass, laminated glass and double-glazed glass.

Asked whether AGPH has plans to increase its production capacity, Go said the world demand—not the market situation although "small units" were being added to the factory in Pang. City.

"Those requirements are meant to add higher value to our products," Go explained. "AGPH has so far spent P75 million on such units."

Also, Go said that AGPH has been embedding production lines on flat panel displays for phones and liquid crystal display televisions sets.

AGPH executive vice president Hiroki Arai said the Philippines was only the third of AGC's production bases in Asia to produce the panel displays after Japan and Thailand.

Demand is strong for this product and AGPH expects to go into commercial production soon to augment the AGC network's output in Asia, Arai said.

The company's new name is in-fourth since it started in Republic Glass Corp., the country's pioneering flat glass manufacturer.

Through a joint venture with AGC, the firm became Republic Asahi Glass Corp. in 1990 and Asahi Glass Philippines in 2000, when AGC attained full ownership.

Go said the renaming coincided with AGC's centennial and was part of a worldwide move to unify the group's brand from three separate brands—Glaverbel in Europe, American Pitt Glass in the Americas and Asahi in Asia.

HALL OF FAMERS. Louis Nicolas Lewis, chair and CEO of multinational food company TLC Beatrice International Holdings Inc. (left), is inducted in the Asian Hall of Fame. Inducted with him is Olympic rowing champion and "Dancing with the Stars" champion Agnis Anino Oliva. The Asian Americans were recognized for their contribution to the community.

DA to expand abaca plantations by 2010

By Amy S. Roxas

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE plans to expand abaca plantations by 50,000 hectares by 2010 to maximize the Philippines' status as the world's biggest producer of the famous "Manila hemp."

The Philippines currently accounts for 85 percent of the world's abaca fiber supply with the remaining 15 percent coming from Ecuador.

Abaca plantations were already expanded by close to 20,000 hectares in 2005 and 2006, with another 40,000 hectares to be added over the next three years, said Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap.

Fiber Industry Development Authority Administrator Lucilo L. Sorino said in an interview that additional investments in abaca expansion may cost as much as P62,000 a hectare.

For once established, an abaca plantation can be productive for up to 20 years if minimal maintenance cost.

The planned expansion can help the country achieve its "optimum abaca production," which foresees placed at around 85,000 metric tons a year.

Last year, the abaca sector produced a loss of 67,000 metric tons due to the typhoons that hit the country in the last semester.

"Most of the plantations being established are in areas less frequently visited by typhoons," Yap said.

The abaca-producing provinces in Bicol and Eastern Visayas sustained an estimated P1 billion worth of damages and typhoons last year.

The expansion is seen to address the "notable lack of equity" of the indigenous materials, as renowned designer Cary Jacob had pointed out during a recent dialogue among government officials, abaca farmers and stakeholders.

She has designed for fashion houses from Saint Laurent, Christian Dior and Givenchy.

On the government's part, the DA had pledged to support direct production through various projects, which FDA is currently implementing on top of its flagship abaca expansion program.

These include programs to rehabilitate typhoon-damaged areas to screen, produce planting materials, promote the product and enable safe drinking.

For Davao exec, strong peso spells gains

By Gerendina Lacerte
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—A STRONG PESO may threaten operations of call centers in Metro Manila, but it can help the economy of other regions, a ranking trade official here said.

Teodulo Panares, city director of the Department of Trade and Industry, said a stronger economy could push more call centers to relocate in other regions and take advantage of the cheaper pool of English-proficient workers.

The peso yesterday closed at P46.08 to the dollar. Panares said the peso's gains over the past months had caught many call center companies flat-footed.

"Since most of them quote their labor expenses in dollars, this may force them to look for other alternative outlets of Metro Manila to cut down on cost," he said.

A number of call centers have already expanded in the provinces, including this city.

Panares said the option of lobbying for the reduction of labor rates in the dollar-earning call centers would greatly help the companies address their issues.

"Some companies had earlier told me that they would leave Metro Manila if they could realize a 20 percent savings in forex, but that was before the exchange rate went down by 40 percent," he said.

"Now that the peso has strengthened against the dollar, call centers may be rethinking about relocating or expanding to areas outside of Metro Manila, where their operations are largely unscreened."

Panares said the city was ready to accommodate call center companies because of the existence of several information and communications technology (ICT) parks.

Two of them, Davinsia IT Park in Barangay Lanang, has been accredited by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza).

Talk centers picking up facilities in Peza-accredited zones enjoy duty-free importation of capital goods and can hire foreign nationals, Panares said.

Although the other ICT-ready facilities here are available for call centers, they have yet to get Peza accreditation.

Panares said the projected expansion projects and relocation of more call centers here would provide fresh opportunities for job-seekers in Davao.

Earlier, the ICT cluster of the Regional Development Council (RDC) had foreseen over P1 billion in ICT investments in Southern Mindanao by 2010.

The investments may translate to about 76,000 jobs.

BPO firms consider moving to greener pastures

SMC to put up grain centers for corn

By Amy R. Roxas

FOOD AND BEVERAGE GIANT San Miguel Corp. has firmed up its commitment to put up 16 grain centers for corn, Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said.

"There is already a meeting of the minds," Yap told reporters. "San Miguel liked what they have seen when they visited two grain centers in South Cotabato and agreed to do the concept."

Although Yap declined to comment on the total investment, he said the DA and San Miguel are already identifying possible sites.

Earlier, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Dennis Araullo estimated that a grain center could cost up to P900 million. With 16 centers, the grain center investment could reach P1 billion.

Araullo also had identified 16 sites—in Quirino, Cagayan province; Isabela, Occidental Mindoro, Tarangnan, Pampanga, Soldedad, Maguindanao, Pangasinan and North Cotabato—as possible locations for the grain centers, each having its own silos, dryers and shellers.

Yap said he had met with San Miguel chair Ginebra Cojuangco and president and CEO Ramon Ang for dinner to discuss joint ventures about a week ago.

"What I'm happy about is that Ramon Ang said we have to enter this big because, in the commodities business, you have to be a volume player," Yap explained. "If not, our entry is wrong since we will not use our own self-sufficiency."

San Miguel buys yellow corn for its broiler and aquatic feeds business. Its purpose for putting up the grain centers is to help stabilize corn prices in Batangas, corn center of P.I.'s hog industry.

Yap said San Miguel proposed that they would put up silos and storage facilities while the DA would concentrate on opening new areas for corn production to ensure adequate corn supply and maximize use of the assets.

18 firms seen to vie for Calaca coal plant

THE POWER SECTOR ASSETS and Liabilities Management Corp. has announced that 18 parties had expressed interest to take part in a third round of bidding for the Calaca power plant in Batangas.

The 600-megawatt coal-fired facility ceases to accrue interest despite failure of two previous auctions.

Psalm said in a statement that nine prospective bidders were foreign companies, including five from the United Kingdom, the sole multilateral from the Asia Pacific.

The agency is mandated under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act to dispose of the power plants of the National Power Corp. and transmission facilities of the National Transmission Corp., as well as certain bets from financial obligations.

Psalm said it was scheduled to hold a pre-bid conference for the 18 firms on July 15, while the auction itself is set within the year.

Consisting of two 300-MW generating units, the Calaca facility is primarily designed to run as a base-load plant—one that runs most of the clock—and can operate to regulate the power network's frequency at a minimum of 180 MW and up to 330 MW.

Also, both units are designed for plant redundancy, which means that one unit can undergo maintenance without affecting the plant's full output.

The Calaca plant was first offered to investors in May 2005, but the auction was canceled after two of three qualified bidders backed out shortly before the deadline for submission of offers.

The second round of bidding held in April 2006 was also declared a failure because the price proposals submitted by the two bidders were below the floor price of $280 million.

Psalm president Jose Ibazeta said that his agency was reviewing the floor price of the facility, as more power supply deals would be attached to it soon.

Psalm vice president Froilan Tiangsing, who is in charge of asset management and electricity trading, had said the agency was expecting a "robust result" as the supply contract to be attached to the facility. *Reinard M. Dominguez*

Gawad Kalinga gets sporting hand from Adidas

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

SERIAL ONE OF THE WORLD'S biggest sports equipment and apparel manufacturers, believes it can help make the world a better place through sports.

It is doing just that in the Philippines by committing to underwrite the sports clothing component in a number of communities under the banner of Gawad Kalinga, one of the country's leading forces in mass housing.

Under the program, Adidas will bankroll the construction of sports facilities in communities, such as basketball, badminton or volleyball courts, and provide the balls and other equipment.

More important, Adidas will also invest in the training of coaches and referees so that the communities will eventually be able to hold tournaments on their own. These events serve to strengthen the ties that bind families living in the Gawad Kalinga communities.

CHILDREN get to play ball with NBA superstar and Adidas endorser Yao Ming.

Mini-Olympics

Adidas first got involved with Gawad Kalinga in May when it held a mini-Olympics to promote sportsmanship and camaraderie among the families.

Participants in Adidas decided to do more projects with the housing organization.

Jerry S. Singian, managing director of Adidas-Philippines Inc., said the investment is an investment that the prospect of harnessing the time and talent of employees to execute sports activities for us has post-tax[illegible] but was what drew Adidas to the project.

"It was difficult at first to get the employees to sacrifice their weekends to be with the community, but once they start the volunteer work and see how they can thrive, it becomes natural," Singian says. "Some have even started bringing their families with them."

Aside from employees, Adidas will also involve its pool of endorsers, mostly basketball players, to hold training camps and sports clinics for community members.

Endorsers

Adidas' pool of endorsers include basketball coaches Yeng Guiao and Renato Magsaysay and players Wesley Gonzales, Dong Kramer, Eric Vil Jimenez, Al Israel, Chris Tiu and Larry Fonacier.

They are also there to inspire and motivate the Gawad Kalinga community members to excel in sports.

Adidas will initially concentrate its resources on four Gawad Kalinga communities, starting with the one in Brookside, Fillarcon, Quezon City, but hopes to adopt more communities as its budget and human resources allow.

Singian says Adidas wants to go to as many communities as possible because it firmly believes that imparting people, especially children, to sports helps them develop the right set of values.

"People exposed to sports as a young age develop different values, such as teamwork and perseverance to get through tough times because, in sports, they have to train and work hard," he says.

For the adults, having top-quality sports equipment carrying the Adidas brand will also give them fun and worthwhile activities that are important in keeping them away from the temptations of drink and drugs.

Singian says Adidas has also decided to link with Gawad Kalinga to [illegible] more attractive rates for its salespersons' programs, which it considers a critical part of its operations in the Philippines.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

More focused

"We were not too organized before and we get all these requests for sports equipment and facilities," Singian says. "With Gawad Kalinga, we can be more focused."

Adidas, however, will continue to hold pocket sports events in other communities, such as those sponsored by the Ateneo de Manila University.

He says Adidas has not been in those communities for too long, and yet Singian can already sense the gains.

"I believe that there really is a big transformation in the communities. I hope that values learned through sports will inspire the kids to make something of their lives better for themselves," he says.

ADIDAS employees volunteer their time to coach members of a Gawad Kalinga community.

In Benguet, vegetable vans secure food lane

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—Operators of trucks and vans that haul vegetable products daily from the fertile valleys to biggest trading post have in major markets in Metro Manila and Southern Luzon have created a food lane that has inspired the opening of markets in other provinces, industry leaders said.

"The Benguet business is actually a real component of the Department of Agriculture's food security program," said Bernie Bipdec, president of the Benguet Truckers and Truckers Association (BTA). "Without trucks, Manila's wholesale market would collapse."

Bipdec cited as example the opening of Kapalaran area (drop-off point) in Villasis town and Urdaneta City, both in Pangasinan. That event expanded the market for Benguet vegetables.

According to BTA records, 75 trucks haul vegetables daily from here to Metro Manila, transporting a daily average of 2.5 million kilos of vegetables. The volume represents 60 percent of Metro Manila's daily vegetable requirements.

Most vegetables are delivered to the public markets of Balintawak, Quezon City, and Divisoria, Manila—the biggest, most accessible [illegible] areas in Metro Manila.

Farmers belonging to BTA members are different from those that deliver vegetables to Urdaneta.

"Urdaneta has become a wider distribution market of highland vegetables for Bangsamoro and the northern Philippines," said Emily Ugag, president of the BTA Urdaneta chapter.

Bipdec said the freight business is committed to deliver highland vegetables to other provinces, since demo-

Bottled sardines, corn coffee are bestsellers in Mindanao trade fair

By Rosneil N. Dalangin

BOTTLED SARDINES AND RICE and corn noodles were the bestsellers during the Tatang Mindanao Gen Tours Day Festival 2007 held this Tinging up a total of P58 million in sales, the Department of Trade and Industry reported.

Held in General Santos City from June 29 to July 2, the year's edition of the annual trade show also provided business leads for local small-scale ventures that have the potential to expand their reach overseas through business matching sessions.

Trade Undersecretary Cristina Cruz-Evangelista said Tatang Mindanao was being institutionalized as one of the biggest trade fairs in the country. The DTI said it had logged a huge number of inquiries from entrepreneurs asking how to take part in it.

"The fair featured an array of products that include processed foods, jewelry, fashion accessories, furniture, garments, handicraft and many other items that drew both foreign and domestic institutional buyers," Cruz-Evangelista said.

Top food sellers in the exhibit included 3S Sea International Corp. from Zamboanga, which took both orders from a company in China for its bottled Spanish sardines; Kumalis Coffee of Cateel in Region for its rice and corn beverage; and BM Foods of Southwestern Mindanao for its tuna products.

In the combined category, top sellers were South Sea pearl crafter Tesoro del Mar; MSE billfisher Fashion; and furniture maker Wild Wood Woodcraft.

Also, fair organizers cited establishment De Lana Agusto Novelties of Cateel for having the lowest-food product in the fair—a necklace made of woven agusan straw and roman strips sold with pearl.

Another top products was Top Tree Handicrafts, also of Cateel, for its rag made from abaca bark and fiber.

In the food category, the best product citation went to Lucille's Food Products for its calamansi cured concentrate.

Second-best product went to the organic fruit of Magsaysay Farmers' Multi-Purpose Cooperative and PY Inc for its ornamental Corp.'s Bottled Sabrina Spanish-style sardines.

Evangelista, who is also the local manager of the Coop program, said that some 1,000 entrepreneurs had invested a total of 1.48 billion in 2006, generating some 70,000 jobs and P1.81 billion domestic revenues as well as P92.22M in export sales.

The Cotabato show was held following the Bicentennial Coop fair in Jolo, which registered the Coop showcase for the Visayas.

In August, a similar trade show would be held at the SM Megamall Megatrade Hall, which would serve as the promotional event for Coop in Luzon.

Forex reserves hit $26.4B . . .

From page B1

next from the 4.0 months recorded in May.

The latest BIR figure was also equivalent to 5.3 times the country's short-term, foreign currency-denominated debt based on original maturity and 2.8 times based on residual maturity.

Short-term debt based on residual maturity refers to outstanding instruments with original maturity of one year or less, plus principal payments on medium- and long-term loans of the public and private sectors falling due within the next 12 months.

In May, the GIR was only enough to cover 3.1 times the amount of short-term, external debt based on original maturity and 2.1 times based on residual maturity.

The BSP said in a statement that the growing GIR could have been higher had the national government and the BSP not engaged in the prepayment of their respective foreign currency-denominated loans.

The BSP prepaid $858 million worth of debts in March and April although these liabilities were still scheduled to fall due in December. The national government redeemed $536 million worth of treasury bonds in the first half that were supposed to mature in June 2008.

Of the GIR as of June, $23.08 billion was placed in foreign currency-denominated investments. The balance was in the form of gold and special drawing rights (SDRs), the currency used by the International Monetary Fund.

The government's economic managers attributed the surge in foreign capital inflows partly to an improving economic environment. One of the beneficiaries of the improving economic environment is the stock market, which has been hitting historical highs.

The Arroyo administration had cited the robust growth in the first quarter, which it said was helping in making investors take a look at investment-grade opportunities in the country.

The Philippine economy, as measured by its gross domestic product, grew 6.9 percent in the first quarter, its strongest performance in 17 years.

People, Events & Products

Edna Aries Espinosa

Building Green 2007 in Market! Market!

A "GREEN MINDSET" IS NOT NECESSARILY A requirement to support the Philippine Green Building Council. But those not in the real estate industry, Building Owners and Managers Association's call to adopt more than a call to adopt more than a common misinformation, is not "sleeping around" which started only March of this year, the PHILBC hopes that through events like the Building Green 2007 exhibit held at the Activity Center of Market! Market!, last June 28-30, they increase public awareness and spark vigorous resistance in the real estate industry.

As, what is this so called green revolution in the real estate industry all about? It is the global trend of implementing energy efficient and management methods of the building industry into practices that are safe, healthy, and environmentally and socially responsible. As the new, work, non-profit organization co-organized by the World Green Council, the Philippine Green Building Council serves as the coordinator for the and construction industry leaders from both the public and private sectors to share knowledge on eco-friendly building practices to ensure a sustainable environment. With sustainable development - the objective of Green Building - in mind it all starts throughout the building process. PHILBC advocates the use of reusing, during passive designs that work around the climate and other can-and conditions to provide good air quality, conserve energy, reduce waste, and lastly, reduce energy bills at a minimum. We only do such work and living environments promote safety, it also promotes a reduce in the employee payroll as quality, some-friendly buildings really work not only for the health of our planet and the health of the people but also the health of the human bus. There's already nothing wrong in terms of investment.

Architect Christopher Arch Cruz, chair of the Philippine Green Building Council, says that most of green building technologies are already available in the Philippines but are very expensive. However, he is positive that as demand increases - as a result of the investment created by PHILBC campaigns - costs of products and technologies will be significantly reduced in the future.

At present, PHILBC is forming an alliance with developers, contractors, suppliers, designers, civil society, academe, building professional associations, financial institutions, and multilateral organizations to jointly develop a nationally recognized green building rating standard. The Green Building campaign is not only limiting itself to housing projects of the government.

Buying a house? Choose "green." Contact the Philippine Green Building Council (PHILBC) through architect Christopher Arch Cruz at 0917-5220372 / 4004041 or log on to http://philgbc.org.

COLLIERS INT'L RECEIVES AWARD FROM EXP

Last July 4 at the discovery, Hal Rangos Sandi ng Manuel (EXP) Company, Manila, Colliers International Research and Consultancy for being recognized at the Annual Meeting Ceremony and Appreciation Lunch for 2007 EXP Globalization's entitled "Outstanding Partnership for Progress." Each year, Colliers International for providing timely data and analysis through their trusted reports. Shown on these with Vice-Lunch Salapuddin at Boundary Board president and chief officer Richard Bachman Jr. director of Colliers International's research and consultancy.

Armando M. Tansingco Jr. EXP Corporation Vice president of Colliers International's Property Management Records for services rendered and their outstanding at www.colliers.com.

PUEBLO NAMED LEADING DEVELOPER IN REGION X

Pueblo de Oro Development Corporation (PDOC) was awarded as the Leading Developer for Economic Housing and the Leading Developer for Open Market Housing for Region X by Vice President Noli de Castro. Chairman Pueblo de Oro Development Corporation (PDOC) Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner Emeritus of the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner Edmundo G. Hernandez. The awards were given during the 6th Philippine Real Estate Development Awards Ceremony. PDOC VP for operations Constantino S. Bide accepted the awards on behalf of Pueblo de Oro. PDOC is the developer of over 500-

hectare Pueblo de Oro Township Development located in Cagayan de Oro. The township also showcases Overseas Loan Bergen International, integrated with classic residential subdivisions with commercial areas, and business hub, golf course, and school.

INSTANT REMEDY FOR YOUR ACHES AND PAINS!

Dr. Christian Emmanuel Rancho, a Filipino chiropractic point specialist and founder of the Manchester Montenegro Clinic, a center for chronic muscular pain management did an ABC-CNN's chronic treating a patient, former Manuel Gomez, 53, suffering from chronic muscular pain. Rancho Rehabilitation Reliever, a 15-minute manipulation of the upper and lower extremities that immediately relieves or dramatically reduces pain. Rancho suffering from chronic muscular pain confirmed in just 15 to 15 minutes. The Simplicity 15 years for the relief and cost of people here and

abroad with migraines, neck, shoulder and back pain, sciatica, knee and joint difficulties and many other ailments. His clinic is at Level 3333, Megastick Bldg., 4326 Buendia corner Sumulong Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

R&B PRINCE JAY-R RENEWS CONTRACT WITH DJM

Tom Carlson recently renewed the contract of Jay-R by an endorsement for 2007. And because of his extremely vibrant personality, Tom considers to now Jay-R's appeal and that he is also a domestic market of Malaysia and get some

time. His fan, energetic, and sweet personality has made a big heart of his many fans, which the Manila Tom has worked hard to be never-ending publicity efforts. Jay-R's making him quite hard to be too

Carlson. Shown in photo during the contract signing are Jay-R with Tom left, DJM manager Antonio Magpantay, Jay-R with his assistant Mark Bong Alejo, Events and marketing manager Ryan Gary.

JJ UNITRADE MERCHANDISE, UNION SIGN CBA

JJ Unitrade Merchandise Inc. and the Independent Union of JJ Unitrade Employees recently signed their CBA in presence and frame a contract and harmonious relationship between the management and the union members. Both of the JJ Unitrade Merchandise Inc. Officer at Public Corporate Center in Ortigas, the agreement was signed by General Pr. President Lucio Bautista, HR manager and their legal counsel Atty. Gilbert Zuniega of Forbes Law Office Salazar law firm representing management of JJ Unitrade Merchandise Inc. and Wonder Pangasinan, president of Independent Union of JJ Unitrade Employees and its officers and members to get commemorative Maynard Gonza.

PHILAM PLANS SIGNS NEW CBA WITH EMPLOYEES

Philam Plans Inc., the country's leading pre-need company providing pension, education and life plans, and its rank-and-file employees received by the Association of Philam Plans Employees (APPEI) have recently concluded negotiations for a new three-year Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for 2006 to 2009. Photo shows Philam Plans president and CEO Lito L. Manalo (center, right) and APPEI Asst Secretary A. Macalalad (center, left) during the formal CBA Signing at the Philam Plans Boardroom. They are joined by members of Philam Plans' management

panel led by EVP - sales operations group Reynaldo T. Gabaldon Jr. (standing, 2nd from right), SVP and CFO Amadeo M. Valdez (standing, 5th from left), SAVP - branch operations division Director Leonardo L. Zabalbal (standing, 7th from left), legal counsel Sergio M. Ermita (standing, 3rd from right), and APPEI - members, seated (from left) Lorna C. Cruz (standing, 6th from right), Representing APPEI are (standing, left) Pilam Deputies Ricardo B. Capangpangan, Secretary Brenda Ricarte, Sonia P. Mosat (seated) Juanita Salvatore, Ricardo's Llanto and vice chair Jovan E. Pascol.

IS DIABETES IN YOUR FUTURE?

Diabetes continues to be a growing health problem across the globe. Currently, there is a count of more than 194 million people with diabetes worldwide. It is expected that this figure could exceed 333 million by 2025. It will be estimated that this figure could exceed 333 million by 2025. It will be estimated that this figure could exceed 333 million by 2025. It will be estimated

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Gene D. Mangosing

Keeping people out of hospitals

Text and photos by Tonia B. Salazar
Reporter

TO KEEP PEOPLE OUT of hospitals is the primary goal of a 75-year-old organic plant-based food supplements company in the United States.

Nutrilite espouses optimal health as a combination of good nutrition, good exercise, a sound mind for optimism and look and proper rest. Founder Health Investor prevalence Sam Behrsberg, a biochemist, also reiterated that rosemary have a choice on all fats.

In a recent interview with Philippine media in Buena Park, California, Behrsberg stressed that by making their own choices, individuals take charge of their own lives. "By the time people will have taken care of [any] before you get sick], there's not much left of you. Bring that awareness of choice early on in people's lives. That's the challenge."

Health problems

Blersberg also said the health problems around the world are caused by chronic diseases, which he estimated as taking up 50 percent of health care costs in the United States and in the Philippines.

"If you give people the evidence optimal health early on and take care of themselves, then cancer and heart disease would show much later [in life]."

Behrsberg lamented the cost of treating chronic illnesses. Billions of dollars are being spent on developing cancer cures and not on prevention.

The company, Blersberg said, is preventive. "Whether it's preventing aging, cancer or heart disease...prevention is

NUTRILITE believes that plant-based diet was the optimum way to achieve good nutrition, and preserving important plant nutrients using its unique concentration is the way to go.

where the heroes is, and there's a tidal wave of interest in this area today, homebased with information coming in from around the world on the role of anti-free and fitness in preventing disease and the optimization of human health."

Nutrigenomics

Food supplement giant Nutrilite keeps 130 scientists researching on and developing over 300 products, and maintains several organic farms in different parts of the world. Blersberg revealed that the company has now ventured into nutrigenomics, a study of how nutrition affects individuals at the genetic level.

Dietary problems do exist among people in industrialized countries, Blersberg admitted. "But genetics has a big role to play in all these. If we can understand genetics better, we can design products better to help people prevent these problems, he said.

Of smart, male Norwegian broods

DISCOVER

Marvette Sanchez Kallon

THE INTRODUCTION FOR THIS STORY was supposed to have been fairly dramatic: Researchers find proof that being the oldest (the theme being the smartest," or something similar. Curiously the study behind this, which appeared in the June 22 issue of Science, has been widely discussed and scrutinized. Unsurprisingly, younger siblings have protested the findings, older siblings have agreed wholeheartedly, and parents are delighted.

In case you don't know what all the fuss is about, recent studies indicate that the oldest male Norwegian child is smarter than his younger male siblings. The news comes by way of Petter Kristensen from the University of Oslo and Tor Bjerkedal from the Norwegian Armed Forces Medical Services, who co-authored the papers which recently appeared in the journal Intelligence and Science. Their findings are based on family data and IQ test results collected by the military on over 200,000 conscripted males—no data from female siblings were included—who were born between 1967 and 1998.

Comparing IQ scores

Kristensen and Bjerkedal started by comparing the IQ scores of male siblings within a family. They then computed the results of all the males of the same birth order. For example, they averaged the IQ scores of all the brothers (males and compared it with the average IQ score of the second-born males, the average IQ score of the third-born males, and so on.

'The achievers'

In an editorial accompanying the Science paper, Frank Sulloway, a psychologist at the University of California at Berkeley noted that previous studies have shown that firstborns are regarded as "the achievers" and tend to be "favorites," but he cites genetics and siblings. While such perceptions aren't necessarily proof of any real differences between siblings in terms of personality or ability, he added, "such comparisons rule other explanations and should be fairly easy to use to help explain why older siblings, by early adulthood, have higher IQs than their younger siblings."

If older siblings are supposed to be the achievers, is it possible that the youngest ones might underperform, however unconsciously or IQ-wise to maintain this notion? When asked, Sulloway said no. "The sibling is a [unconscious] world allows another sibling to have a free hand in sibling competition," he replied via e-mail.

"If younger siblings have lower IQs, that is probably not to help the older sibling occupy a family role but rather because they are putting time and effort into something else, such as sports or hobbies."

Regardless of what Sulloway and Bjerkedal may bring to the debate over birth order and intelligence, Sulloway's answer makes one thing clear: Siblings are not, and greater order, sibling rivalry will always flourish.

E-mail the author at tsalazar@inquirer.com.

Docs deserve good retirement

By Robert R. Castillo, MD

PRACTICING DOCTORS NOT BE MORE hours in their work than those who have an 8 to 5 job, and talk about irregular hours, it comes with the medical profession. Many doctors having to wake up in the middle of the night to attend to an emergency or unscheduled case's disease with the hope that the answer or relief can still beat the emergency room.

Many doctors I know especially those who have small hospitals in the provinces work 24/7 and literally take any vacation. It's not so much that they're in a no work, no pay or no work, no business predicament, but more because of their dedication to their patients.

Totally unprepared

It may be generally true that doctors make good money in exchange for all the hard and stressful work they do. They have no problems with their basic needs or all money and jobs, but frequently, we have doctors caught totally unprepared for an emergency, and sometimes less than necessary with not certainly whether or not their modest savings will be enough to support their lifestyle adjusted living standards after their retirement.

What's even more unfortunate is when doctors are full retirement investment because of their poor knowledge in managing their finances and investments. Instead of increasing their hard-earned savings, they are their total net worth gradually depleted as they age.

"This is something which we didn't learn in medical school during training," says Dr. Heinrich Alejandro, immediate past president of the Philippine Society of Anesthesiologists. "Many doctors realize too late that they should have prepared for their retirement by making sure they had enough savings and investments to make them financially independent up to their twilight years."

How to retire in style

The PSEI in collaboration with Theophilus Sit., is organizing another whole-day seminar-workshop for doctors and other healthcare professionals titled Entrepreneurial "Smarts" to Financial Abundance (... and how to retire in style). This will be held at the Crowne Plaza on July 21.

Social professors on financial management from the Asian Institute of Management have been invited to share with the participating doctors practical pointers on the basic principles of money, how their hard earned money can work for them to achieve financial Goals. Growing your Net Worth, Identifying Financial Opportunities, The Power of Compound Interest, Preparing for Retirement, Investing in the Stock and Bonds, The Real Estate Market, Minimizing Taxes, etc. and The MBAWAY formula for Financial Abundance.

Nursing Undergraduate) ABE professors who will compose the faculty are Noel Lyzzo, Rafael Asuncion, Alejandro Peñawar and Jay Bernardo.

Practical pointers

According to the organizers, this two-day course-cum-workshop doctor participants practical pointers about a strategic organizational plan, Financial Independence, how their hard earned money can work for them to achieve financial Goals and even how a financially unprepared doctor can become financially free and retire in style.

The ultimate workshop is one of the joint service activities of the PSEI and The Inquirer. The PSEI and The Inquirer team are encouraged by the positive feedback from participants of previous seminars. This is already the third workshop which equips doctors with the basics on finance, entrepreneurship and investments to prepare them to guide the doctors on how to grow their assets on the side.

Since they're not totally dependent on their income as physicians, they can spare more time effecting their interests for this is charity patients, and also take a break from work and relax in their favorite resort. Some has taken a toll on the health of many busy doctors.

Doctors and other healthcare professionals who are interested to attend may call the PSEI secretariat at 687-2841, 687-7073, 631-7970 or 0917-6255518.

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C-Lium FIBRE

Luly Cruz, National Scientist

EUREKA!

Queenie N. Lee-Chua

LULY D. SANTOS, SCIENCE AND Technology Awards Lay as pay homage to people who have done much for our country, but who—unfortunately—are not well known as movie stars or basketball players. There are one National Scientists, and Leandro "Lely" Javier Cruz, DSc, is the latest awardee announced to be seven-fold life home.

Last year, Lely at 60, was conferred the rank and title of National Scientist, the highest honor given to a man or woman of science in the Philippines.

Background

Lely graduated BS Chemistry at the University of the Philippines in Diliman in 1962, and her MS and PhD in biochemistry at the University of Iowa, United States, in 1966 and 1969, respectively. She served as research aide in 1963 at the Institute of Biochemistry, where she later returned after earning her doctorate. She taught as assistant professor at the UP Department of Biochemistry in 1979 and became full professor in 1977.

From 1980 to 1988, Lely served as dean of UP Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology for over 20 years, she also spent successive months every year as research associate and as research professor in the University of Utah. She is now listed at the UP Marine Science Institute.

Toxins from cone snails

I had the pleasure of interviewing Lely in depth for my book "Ten Outstanding Filipino Scientists" a few years back. I remember vividly my fascination as she handled deadly cone snails with finesse and nonchalantly explained how their toxins could be used to make useful substances.

Lely established the Biotic Laboratory (1988), Glaxo Wellcome (1990), Bolivar A. Ramirez (1990), Jose B. Alonzo (1990), Celia T. Castillo (1990), Bienvenido U. Juliano (2000), Bernie A. Aragon (2001), Ramon C. Barba (2002), Onofre O. Campos (2004), Ricardo B. Lontoc (2005), and Leandro J. Cruz (2006).

I thank Artemis Gatmaitan of NAST for many details about Dr. D'jo's work. "Ten Outstanding Filipino Scientists" is available in most bookstores. Or call Sirol Publishing at 427-8949 or e-mail at pereira.galileo@yahoo.com.ph/publishing.com to order a copy.

Queenie N. Lee-Chua, PhD, is professor of health and psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University. Contact her at lleechua@yahoo.com.

Award-winning developer focuses more on mass housing

By Charles E. Bulos

PROVIDING AFFORDABLE housing to less affluent sector of the society has always been a top priority of the government.

But this is becoming an almost impossible task considering that the country's backlog now stands at 1.4 million housing units, according to a recent Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council estimate.

In order to at least lessen the figure, the government in recent years has encouraged the private sector to invest more in mass housing projects, which has a multiplier effect of 16:1.

"This would mean that for every peso invested in this type of housing project, P16.00 worth of investments in allied industries sectors are generated," explained Manuel Concepcion, president of Pasig-headed realty developer Concepcion Corp., a leading developer of mass housing projects in the country's east.

Committed investment

PHIRC has been one of the developers that contributed to the P13.05 billion worth of committed investments from January to April this year as reported recently by the Department of Trade and Industry.

According to the department, such investment figure is already more than figure (39.24 billion) generated last year's entire same.

"Our company has been actively supporting regional dispersal and more balanced urban-rural development through controlled selection of project locations. This is why most of our projects are located in the countryside," Concepcion explained.

He reported that from 1990 to 2007, the PHIRC has developed about 300 hectares of land into 30 completed housing projects which translates to some 12,500 quality yet affordable housing units.

Conscientiously locate

"We conscientiously locate our developments in areas where there are concentration of higher housing demand in response to the government's call to address the country's burgeoning housing needs," said Robert Ikeno, PHIRC senior vice president.

In fact, PHIRC was recently a recipient of the many awards given by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board.

"It was indeed a great honor for us to receive these awards. We are happy that the government is recognizing our efforts," Ferrancullo said.

The SLUDB, which is responsible for coming up with a comprehensive land use and physical plan for the country and cities, has awarded PHIRC as the leading developer in economic housing (house and lot package project) in Region 2 in the Cagayan Valley in northern Luzon), Region 4-a in the Western Tagalog, and Region 10 in Northern Mindanao.

The company was also awarded as leading developer in socialized housing (house and lot package project in Region 10 in Northern Mindanao).

Ferrancullo lastly, was also awarded as leading developer in socialized housing (house and lot package project) in Region 2 in the Cagayan Valley in northern Luzon), Region 4-a in the Western Tagalog, and Region 10 in Northern Mindanao.

The company was also awarded as leading developer in socialized housing (house and lot package project in Region 10 in Northern Mindanao).

Ferrancullo lastly, also otherwise known as low-cost housing, refers to units with price ranging from P150,000 to P1.5 million while socialized housing units refer to those with price tags of up to P299,000.

PHIRC president Concepcion explained that by employing modern construction technology and building materials, the company is able to build quality yet affordable housing units.

PHIRC believes that buyers of economic and socialized housing also deserve beautifully laid-out communities as well as functional amenities.

Recognizing private sector

SLUDB Commissioner Brenda Pulumbarit explained during the awarding ceremony that the agency is encouraging more of recognizing its private sector partners in addressing the country's housing needs, especially in the economic and socialized housing sector.

Concepcion said these awards will further inspire PHIRC to continue developing housing projects that are responsive to the needs of the Filipino homebuyers.

In fact, the company is currently developing loan rent and economic housing projects in Dasmariñas City (in Cavite province) and Cabuyao City (Laguna Subdivision) and Cagayan de Oro (Uber Creek Subdivision), which have a total of 2,000 housing units.

Designing with a partner

WORKING ON A DUPLEX DREAM HOME represents many challenges to a designer. Unlike corporate or commercial projects, most residential projects are not schedule-driven. Consequently, timelines often extend way past targeted deadlines. Moreover, the assortment of hurdles that have to be addressed within the four walls of a home are even more of creative challenge.

And as if these were not enough, we often have to deal with the duality of each participant, the male form and female form—husbands and wives coming together, or failing apart, in the pursuit of their design's perfection in the details. We have often been entrusted to discussions between couples that often start as light banter, turn into near mockery and have consternation as frustrations come to the fore.

Design Dimensions

Isabel Berenguer

Associate

Duality in our perspectives

As an architect, our designs are married to and working in a professional partnership with another architect, our designers. I have had to illustrate these differences in our perspectives. I too have had my fair share of heated discussions with both couples.

My husband and business partner, Ding, was born (even) allowed to university. We were married in high school and while I was the annoyingly active student, he was one of the quiet

MY better half is an unguarded measure the visual artist-non-architect among his works of art

and unassuming sort. I understood his silence when I got to know him better. His language was not stylized, it was visual. Ding is an extremely talented and prolific visual artist—if you'll take my word for it. He has developed more of his art in creative silence, in quiet hours of pouch, spent ideating or stamping brushstrokes to create works of art that many have described as inspiring.

Today, Ding is more verbally expressive, and because of that, our discussions on matters of design have graduated to smoother, more productive levels. We argue, but apparently does not end in collision but to refine and through collaboration and mutual respect for each other's perspective. Because our professional lives developed independently of the other, we now find ourselves better appreciating each other's talents and experiences.

Good working relationship

I must admit though that it took time for our partnership to fully develop. Many couples building family homes often don't have the luxury of time to nurture a good working relationship and fall into the ire of common disagreements.

While the only worry to invest in a good refrigerator, her husband would rather put the money into the latest electronic video system. While the man agonizes over a ceiling that his house's architecture is not to your liking, sometime enough, the wife anguishes over ceramic and drives the poor husband crazy. And if after weeks, even months, husband and wife exhibit distinct preferences on architecture—ceiling, color and furniture—it could be judged as either right or wrong, only different.

In that one's dream home does not become an arena for husband and wife conflict, I often advise couples to first lay out all practical needs and rank those over and above preferences, thereby creating a common foundation for action. Next, I encourage them to be professional when one of their objective recommendations and decisions on matters of design.

Right No. 3 would probably be to mediate their partnership. If one has adhered to namely (and up with someone of opposing tastes, it may be time to make a resolution: any change in one's personal preferences. The other option would be... to simply change one's partner.

'21st Century Cities'

WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU hear the words "Digital," "Genetic," "Intelligent" and "Net"? Yes would probably think about high-tech robots from Japan or state-of-the-art computer games. There are ever thought about them as important components in emerging cities?

Last last month, the "21st Century Cities" conference was held in Dublin, Ireland, where case scenarios that were presented by the sole Eisenhower Fellow from the Philippines, architect Leo Ng of Ayala Land Inc. Below, she shares her insights on the latest developments now emerging in the hallowed halls of Europe, United States and Asia. These are issues we will find at the top of the work lists of local city planners and property developers in the very near future.

Digital trends in global cities

The conference in Dublin focused on current and future trends in cities around the world. The 21st century has begun on city trends ranged from the impact of technology, the importance of the "creative class," challenges facing cities like Dublin, and the role of culture and arts in urban renewal. Dublin was on an appropriate conference venue since the country experienced rapid economic growth in the past decade or so.

Known as the "Celtic Tiger," Ireland is now the world's leading exporter of computer software, and is Europe's fastest growing economy in 2006 is expected to have elevated Ireland's age-old port and industrial economy to an information technology platform, since it has key IT players from overseas in

Marcelo de Guzman Jr.

its business on their shores.

While the concept of high-tech cities has been around for some time and has propelled places such as Singapore, Amsterdam, and Taipei to the forefront of the IT map, digitalization based on how technology is utilized in the day-to-day operations of the metropolis.

One of the examples of trends discussed by Maeve Cooley, the director of IT Investment of Intel, was the use of wireless cities in Europe, United States and Asia, citing efficient applications of how technology has advanced areas of city governments and administration in areas of crime prevention, education and the delivery of services. As an example, he mentioned the Wireless@sf's Plan that is in England, where Soho, the hub of night life and entertainment in London, is located.

With the influx of tourists, migrants and workers, Westminster's incidence of crime also increased. So in 2003, the city council of Westminster piloted the Digital City, a project which would connect the whole borough to make it easier to do business with the council, renew the infrastructure, deliver customized improvements in education, and reduce incidence of crime.

For instance, in each street, Westminster has one of the most sophisticated CCTV (closed circuit television) camera systems, installed on street lamps and sides of buildings along highly susceptible areas. Using many anti-terrorism and hard-wired CCTV systems which take several months to install, Westminster developed a wireless system using microdot-like wireless network allowing the deployment, installation, relocation, or expansion of its monitoring system within 24 hours. The wireless system offers unprecedented flexibility and responsiveness.

Technology for the people

While the convenience offered by wireless systems is to most evidence to almost every laptop and email phone user, even in developing cities such as Metro Manila, metropolitan areas are also exploring the use of wireless technology for purposes of public governance and administration appears to be the next step in the technological evolution of cities.

Ireland's Minister for Communications Noel Dempsey, for instance, is using the broadening application of technology unobtrusively provide unparalleled convenience for users, they likewise raise concerns regarding confidentiality, privacy and security. The technological advancement with convenience and consumption seems to be at odds with the growing interest in environmental preservation, social equity and economic stability (the triple bottom line of sustainable development).

Certainly, there is a need to bring state-of-the-art digital wireless technology to the 21st century down to the level of a population that may not even have ready access to personal computer. We can probably start off with wireless communications systems that are ubiquitous in the Philippines such as the cell phone networks. While it may still take years for Wi-Fi digital cities to be truly known to be broadly adopted in the Philippines, perhaps an intermediate one implies the same systems, allowing wireless communications to become less just tools of personal convenience and productivity but also to be used for delivering public services.

A key insight gained from the "21st Century Cities" conference is not about the availability or the type of technology but the use of it. The investments in how such technology is used to deliver an enhanced urban environment. While we may be less advanced in technology, in communication is something that Filipinos have in abundance. One only needs to recall how Filipinos have been able to use instant messaging in a nationwide form of communication long before it became commonplace in the world economy.

Digital mobile phones became the standard mode of domestic telecommunication, long before conventional telephone lines could be installed in remote provinces. The availability of technology, together with necessity and Filipino adaptability, has allowed us to bypass the conventional evolutionary route. Thus, it may be possible—but in the not so distant future, for our version of a digital city, using adopted versions of readily available, affordable, sustainable wireless technologies—to serve the increasingly urbanized mass population of the Philippines beyond personal communication. All it takes is a bit of frequent thinking.

Pampanga an 'it' place . . .

Pampanga B4

have more than 75 foreign and local companies doing business.

2 projects

And now—make way everyone—BF properties now finds land for, has thrown its hat into the fray, first 18 minutes from Clark in bustling Angeles City and this is where BF has launched its planned P750 million residential project (35 hectares) and a P1.8 billion mall development project (9 hectares).

To be developed by Ayala store company Commercial Investments Inc., Filinvest Plaza will also be accessible from Metro Manila via the North Luzon Expressway using the Angeles Exit.

The 9-thronging will be a "personalized mall" for that purely local region as Ayala plans to put in many local and international fashion brands, popular labels, fine-rate dining and family entertainment.

Chris Aberasturi, CII president, revealed that the selling price of their residential lots per square meter will range from P8,000 to P12,000. Lot size sizes will range from 250 to 500 sq m.

Developer/owner Ayala Town Investments purchased a 1.03-sq m corner lot at the park area facing southeast. Site described it as a good investment's concept, especially the dandified park-like setting there can more prime lots.

Tech specs

The Malayan Plaza's grand entrance will have a towering eight-storied guardhouse of contemporary architecture. A 20-story-wide entrance boulevard with "statuesque" amenities highlights and an articulated perimeter fence with landscaping.

It will have what is calls a 1.2-hectare forest park component of a field as outdoorsman, a 20-meter lap pool and bubble pool, open spaces and meandering walkways and a jogging trail. The entire establishment will have Wi-fi connectivity.

It will also include a 6,500-sq m luxury hotel that includes covered courts for basketball and badminton, an open field that doubles as a jogging and soccer field and a view deck to enjoy the "expansive view" of the Angeles horizon.

2 linear parks

There will be two linear parks that will connect the hotel zone and the Sports Hub. The will have approximate areas of 3,000 sq m each.

The North Central Park features a relaxing ambiance that has water element, gazebos, benches for individual leisure time-out, landscaped open space for intimate group gathering and BF-Eucenia connectivity.

The South Central Park features kiddie amenities specially designed for kids contained in a hotel-designed playground. Plans are for creating a clean, green and safe environment.

It will have cluster development which will have private pocket communities that will promote neighborhood interaction.

Residential lots have sizes ranging from 229 to 500 sq m and model size of 220 sq m.

The house and lot will have amenities including upgraded interior finish, regular interior and exterior paint, upgraded sanitary wares, pantry, PVC/H Doors.

There will be an open layout, the different floor plans: 140, 166, 208, 226 and 246.

Facilities and utilities include property management, 24-hour security, underground supply, overhead water tanks, telephone, sewage treatment plant.

The turnover of Phase 1A and 1B is scheduled at March 2008, and Phase 1A is scheduled for turnover in May 2009.

Editor Cesar D. Hangaway

PROPERTY

EVERYTHING'S just ouchie your cosmopolitan lifestyle is at the inexpensive community of Mariposa.

Pampanga a new haven for developers

By Tessa S. Salazar

KAPAMPANGANS ME-ner had it no good lan-dar on the real estate scene is concerned. This time, the business boom hasn't required any help from a US military base.

Factors that helped attract developers to Pampanga are the province's proximity to Manila, lots of English-speaking residents (who view foreigners as just part of the daily life), major communities and flourishing business process outsourcing (BPO) companies.

One of the biggest BPO firms to have made Pampanga's major base is tech business headquarters Telus International. And two months ago, the world's biggest maker of mobile phone chips landed in the rival province of Bataan to build its 77,000-square-meter, $3-billion semiconductor facility on Clark Freeport Zone—choosing that over China and Thailand.

Another major business establishment is the 44-hectare Philcrest Industrial Park Inc., a joint venture in Clark Freeport Zone that is expected to

MARKET, 67

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Whether you're searching for the spaciousness of suburban living or the comforts of city life, Sycamore Tower fits the bill perfectly. Here, units boast of generous living spaces that allow unrestricted movement. The expansive feel is further emphasized by the unobstructed view of the city's skyline. The outdoors are equally inviting, with more than half of the total land area devoted to open spaces. And because it's centrally located near Makati and Ortigas, work and your other needs are just minutes away.

Call 888-3333 or visit www.dmcihomes.com for any inquiries.

Super Charmed

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Shop, look and listen
Hong Kong style page 11

Get to know
Harry's chicks page 11

The plot thickens for Philippine literature
page C4

Two timer

NO CURFEW CONFINES 'TO AREAS' now ground by enlisting 68-British football sensation, James and Philip Younghusband, as the 2007 brand ambassadors for its premium line of watches.

These goodlooking brothers are probably most famous for their involvement with the English Premier League champion Chelsea FC, the world's most expensively assembled football league. The Younghusband brothers grew up loving this beautiful game and are actually excellent at it that they still headline the Philippine Stars' Under 23 National Football Team at the 2007 Southeast Asian Games scheduled in Thailand later in the year.

Apart from kicking their way to the top (a dream shared with their talent on the pitch, there is another thing the brothers have in common...they are total lovers the beautiful women of books.

James, at 23, is left-field and boardroom focused in his work, these looks and mysterious personality. So Cartier chose him as the brand ambassador for its luxury line of watches comprising of Roge Rou, Pilot, Ivory Mystic, Time Force and Style Watch.

On the other hand, the young, colorful and feel Philip "Ledge" Younghusband will represent Tissot, Argentina, Swiss Luxuries, Logo and Tommy Hilfiger. The 19-year-old looks to a risk-taker who is willing to experiment with different looks and designs to match his distinct personality. The hyper, witty and sociable kid is also all Clarkes Boatwork's most valuable player when he was the recently known Los Angeles by LA. Galaxy to see if he's got what it takes to play alongside David Beckham on the field soon.

Admittedly a huge fan of Tissot, Phil went his favorite colour T-Touch Series during his various media appearances and photo shoots.

Inspired by So Cartier's Rotiva concept, both boys are successfully rocking their original cuts in the international football scene. Therefore its fitting to showing the Younghusband Brothers So Cartier will definitely continue to be a cut above the rest.

So Cartier watch items are located at the 3R Level of the Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Farmer's Plaza in Araneta Center, Market! Market! at the 3rd, Mall of Asia, Festival Alabang, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 3, Robinsons Galleria, SM Aura Premier, SM City Marikina, SM City Pampanga, SM City Bicutan, SM City Cagayan de Oro, and SM City Davao. It has kiosks at the department stores of SM Makati and North Edsa, Landmarks Mall in Cagayan de Oro City, Robinsons Ermita and in the Podium.

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HONG KONG LOVE IT, LOVE IT!

ROYAL RUFFLES. Charmaine Pedernal and Gloria Lee

GRACE AND POISE. Jessica Laurel and Mich Dulce

BLING QUEEN. Jenni Eggerman

SWEET n' SPICY. Joyce Jimenez

RED RIBBON. Kara Torralba

PARTY PRINCESSES. Vicky Rodriguez and Melissa Raimundo

Ria Amendola and David Nugent

y one

The royal court of Embassy celebrated it's 2nd year anniversary with Royal style!

Photos by Daniel Tan and Willy Sow

IN A LAND NOT SO FAR away, the royal kingdom of Embassy celebrated its second (make that almost third) year of endless happy endings. Royalty from all over the land walked the long, red carpet and gathered to join the festivities. People from nearby kingdoms Monteriz, Dunhill, Sensei, Maison Champagne, Chivas Regal, Ramatti Ruiz, Skyy Vodka and Jose Cuervo were there to offer support as well. The celebration included a lot of singing, dancing and different kinds of merry-making. The four kings of kingdom Embassy—Fernando Amorsolo, Erik Cua, Jim Herrera and Tim Yap—partied the night away and gave away tons of presents to those who have served their kingdom well.

Embassy promises to grow as a kingdom—it will soon be expanding to provide services in two more of both food and entertainment City and going everyone a service that only royalties deserve.

MAGICIAN PARENTS. Jay Hen Manila Ann Chiong and Dennis

Electoral Fun

Paolo R. Reyes
Janice Cuenca-Dario

THE MIDTERM ELECTION SEASON may have left some of you still itching to exercise your voting powers. Since 2B is still light years away, here's a fun and totally non-political alternative: vote for your nightlife and entertainment favorites in the Third Annual 24/7 Nocturnal Awards! Some of this year's categories include your favorite restaurant, bar or club, DJ, artist or live act, music event and more. The nomination period will end on Tuesday, July 31. Based on initial tallies, Ohlmow bistro-lounge is currently leading in the Favorite Restaurant category, while DJ Perry Corazon's Christmas-themed gig is locked in a tight race with other Music Event contenders. Visit mag24-7.com/awards.

The Police Chase

Xaxjaxx have been nagging about The Police, and we're not referring to our local law enforcement officers. The legendary '80s rock band—composed of British frontman Sting, guitarist Andy Summers and drummer Stewart Copeland—will celebrate their 30th anniversary with a bang: their first world tour since 1984!

If you want the music biz to step by Manila in 2008, show your support by signing the "Bring the Police to Manila!" online petition at www.petitiononline.com/policeMNL/petition.html. There are currently over 350 signatures, but they need at least 10,000. Spread the word.

Marissa Cooper Lives

Despite dying a dramatic death in the near-distant TV series, "The O.C.," Marissa Cooper lives, apparently. A few months ago, People's Palace in Greenbelt 3 became the perfect stalking ground for popular actress Martha Bautista, who was caught cloning in the. The semester with a loud vivid green. When asked by 24/7 if she was in town for a vacation or work, she answered with an enigmatic "no," and added that she was only in Manila for a day. Was she cooking up an endorsement deal with the retail giant? Intriguing.

Embassy Expansion!

The ambassadors of Embassy are currently busy firming up plans for their soon-to-open club. Word on the street is that it will be at the former MTV office in The Bar-complex. Yes, just a few baby steps away from their hugely successful (and sometimes controversial) establishment.

Wednesday Music Series

On July 11, 8 p.m., Yoko Ethel will be performing at Sugarbowls, Greenbelt 3. Ayala Center. This is part of a special series of music events sponsored by Wintons. Bound to be packed on July 25: Lucid trip hop artists Drip and the talented Acoustic Jive team the featured performers in the free two concerts.

More Super! 24/7 events

July 7, Saturday

Ed Caladay: Live! with DJ All Nighterman at Pinchotime; 15%: Choirs of Spain concert at Iloilo Cathedral; Weird Barrioncest! "Santa Fe-Ad" exhibit at Intramuros Gymnasium; DJs Red Tp & Mario Garcia at Fantasia; Skates w/ Soundspeed DJs at Embassy Cuisine; Pawpo w/ DJ Red I & Soul Flores at M Café; Soup Saturdays at Mostly's; DJs Joel Hosica & Yoko Boko at Temple; Emerson at Café Havana Greenbelt; Dance Music at Mercury; NBA Madness at SM Mall of Asia (Music Hall); DJs Scratchmark & Rita at Palace of Jasper; Aretha at Café Havana Makati; Massive Saturdays at Bar; Family Affair at Medi's

July 8, Sunday

Third Virgin Lobster at CCP; NBA Madness at SM Mall of Asia (Music Hall); High-School Musical at Meralco Theater; Mostly & Mariano in Leon Lopa exhibit at Mesay; Amarello reinspection at DP Virgin Museum; Tony Bothowski: Malaya Jokes at CCP Main Gallery; Nurse Rimes in Café Havana Greenbelt; Brunch Affair w/ Concentrics at Antonio's Greenbelt; Sad at White & The Blues at SM Mall of Asia (Piano Area); Jazz Sunday Brunch at M Café

July 9, Monday

Happy Monchen w/ Boppy Mayonne at Embassy Cuisine; Mallows at Mariana Bar; Aretha at Café Havana Greenbelt; I Dont Like Mondays! w/ DJs Red Tp & Gretchen Wilson at Chocolate Underground in Manila; Retro Nights at Antonio's Greenbelt; Family Affair at Medi's

July 10, Tuesday

Deep Space Sun: DJs Bruno Marquez & Jason Strong at Embassy Club; Cosmic Blends w/ DJ Manolo Davis at Embassy Cuisine; BPT at Magnet Café 23 high Street; Electronics Night at Fantasia; Witch '80s Night w/ DJ Arli at Chillspot

Jazz Night at Mezzo; Sparkle w/ DJ Pooh at Absinth; Casanova at Café Havana Greenbelt; Open-Mic Night at Club O; Piano Nights at Antonio's Greenbelt; Aretha at Sound Out at Medi's

July 11, Wednesday

The Pilsener Dancer's Series feat. Yoko Ethel at Sugarbowls, Greenbelt 2 at 9 p.m.; House of Soul w/ DJs Bruno Marquez & Jason Strong at Bar; W Wednesdays w/ DJs Red Tp & Coz Ocampo at Embassy Cuisine; Jack Smooth Bar at Fantasia; Retro Classics at Pluralcene CB; DJs Rico Rhonda & Johnpower at Embassy Club; Wholesale at Mostly's; '90s Night w/ DJ David Archuleta at Cosmic; Live Rock Bands at Temple; DJs Rimsworth & Christmas at Prince of Jasper; Aretha at Café Havana Greenbelt; Medi & Pretendo at Medi's

July 12, Thursday

Bikini Fashion Night w/ Jermaine Brown at Pitchin; Cancer Zodiac Party at Bed; Adam Sinnen Ball at Mandarin Oriental Manila; Latin Night w/ Tuba Mandina at Mezzo; Flower-Whatever Thursdays at Absinth; Beggar Mistress at Café Havana Greenbelt; Backback Thursdays at Club O; Radio Cognina at Cognina; Open Mic Night at Annie's Lindsey Suites; Witch's Secret Open Bar at Bed; The Groover at Medi's; Pepper Magazine launch party at SMW Pavilion; Fun Bonifacio Global City; Mallows at Mariana Bar

July 13, Friday

Military Ball at Bed; House of Soul w/ DJ Jason Xuang at Alchemy; Chill by the Bay at SM Mall of Asia; Fiesta Mexico; Salsa Fridays w/ DJ Red Tp at Plano; Elektro Dokter w/ DJ Adrian Guerrero & Mr Badillon at M Café; DJs Mark Israel & Owens Sez at Embassy Club; Decadence w/ DJ Bryce Almazan at 20's; Fiesta Sunday at Fantasia; Dr Jared Archuleta at Cognina; Dr. Bruno at Mostly's; 80's! Mine I Love Fridays! at Absinth; Soul Elixir w/ DJ Mario Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; Live Hip-Hop at Temple; Aretha at Café Havana Greenbelt; The Deluxe '80s Bistro; DJ Smoothmark at Prince of Jasper; Nurse Rimes at Café Havana Makati; Rosie Pink Medi's

Schedules may change without prior notice. For a complete listing of events, hit 24/7 (BGH) 2852 (Globe) and 2852 (Smart). Submit your schedules before Wednesday to events@mag24-7.com & mag24_7@yahoo.com

Super

You're in luck Harry Potter fans! Get to know Evanna Lynch and Bonnie Wright, aka Luna Lovegood and Ginny Weasley, in this exclusive interview

Meet Harry's gal pals at Hogwarts

IN A FEW DAYS, MUGgles all over the world will be making a beeline to the theaters and bookstores to catch up on the lives of Harry Potter and his Hogwarts crew.

It's a bit like staying tuned to a seven-year-long saga. We fans have long on from chapter to chapter, and kept their eyes on the ensharming star stars they were too small to who left home to take up their magic wands. Now, the characters are all grown up ("sniff"), and have even started dating in what has got to be the best example of paranormal romance.

Lucky me, that I was able to catch two of Hatty's gal pals, Evanna Lynch, who plays Luna Lovegood, and Bonnie Wright, cast in Ginny Weasley, in an exclusive interview. Lucky you, Harry Potterheads, that I made it through their thick Irish and English accents (with the help of a good friend) in order to get their words to y'all a few days before the movie starts. Anything to ease the pain of waiting even for just a bit!

Luna Tunes: Evanna Lynch

So JK Rowling called you the perfect person to play Luna Lovegood. Why do you think she said that? Do you have any qualities similar to Luna? Are you dreamy and spaced out?

Evanna: Yes, I have a few. I think she called me so because I was "perfect" in because I care about Luna very much and that's really important. And I really wanted to do her justice.

Have you always been a big Harry Potter fan?

E: Since I was 8, yeah. And I just keep getting bigger all the time.

Tara Sinay

Have you always been setting?

T: Nothing's before. I went to drama school and just did her things, you know? Like plays, but not her actions stuff.

Do you want to pursue a career in acting?

E: No, I don't think so. It can be a bit fun at times but, at the moment, it can be a bit boring sometimes.

If you weren't playing Luna Lovegood, what would be the other character in Harry Potter that you'd love to play?

E: If I could—Dumbledore, I think he's so cool.

So how is your relationship like, in real life, with Daniel Radcliffe? Are you guys close?

E: We've not really close but that's because I got to know the others more since they are always around, while he's always on the set. He's really nice and whenever I do see him he's so friendly, he's the one who made me feel at home at first because he introduced me to everyone. Yeah, he's nice.

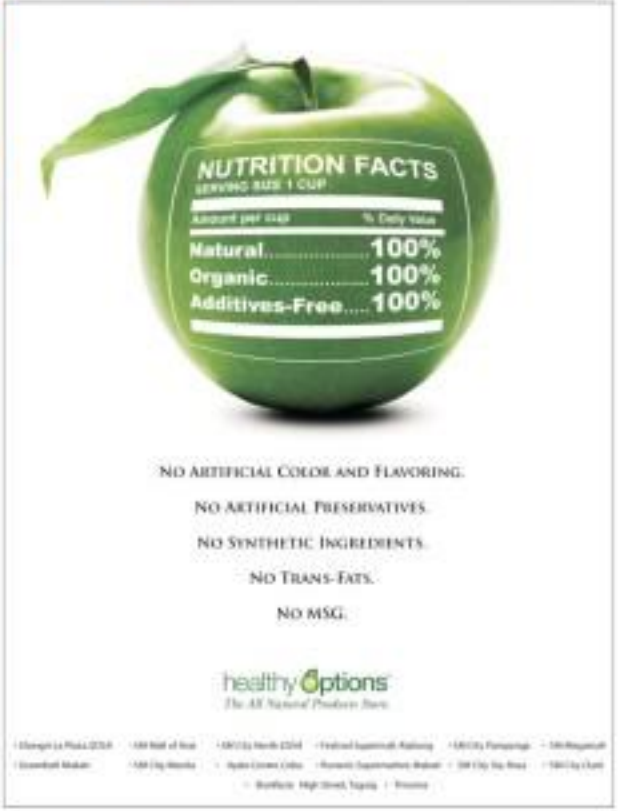
How do you deal with fame now?

E: You know I don't really get recognized at all since. I don't know, it's just me in Ireland people aren't that big into Harry Potter in my hometown everyone knows me but they don't make fun because they've used to me. It would be different after the film.

Where exactly is home?

E: Termonfeckin, in Ireland. Termonfeckin? I said I lived in

MEET ALSO



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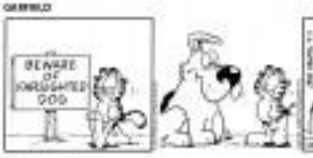

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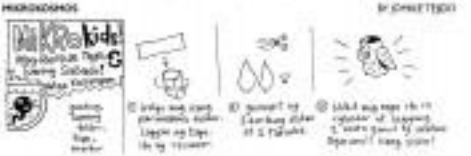

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CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

9				4				6
						3		
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Difficulty Level ★★★★

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Answer to previous puzzle

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4	9	1	8	7	5	2	3	6
7	3	6	1	2	9	5	8	4
3	7	2	9	8	4	1	5	6
1	8	4	6	5	2	7	3	9
9	6	5	7	3	1	4	9	2
2	1	7	3	9	6	8	4	5
6	8	3	5	4	7	2	6	1
8	4	9	2	1	8	3	7	9

★★★★

Meet Harry's gal . . .

STICKING TOGETHER. James Phelps as Fred Weasley, Bonnie Wright as Ginny Weasley, Rupert Grint as Ron Weasley and Oliver Phelps as George Weasley

From page D1:

a place called Semmedolan! Anyway how was it like working with director David Yates?

D. It wasn't hard. Whenever you couldn't get the scene right, he talks to you and he asks you the right questions and then when you do the scene again it's easier. He just gets it. He doesn't say 'you didn't do it well, or oh, 'or you did it wrong you should do this,' he just asks you why are you doing this and what you think she is feeling and that was just great.

Sometimes you're character is so dramatic and special out all the time, do you find that, even after the movie, you're still the Luna Lovegood?

E. Oh yeah! Definitely (think). I become more like her anyway, but that's because I like her and I don't mind that she's rubbing off on me. But I'm starting to love that a lot.

There are a lot of Harry Potter fans here in the Philippines. Could you give them all a message?

D. Hi to everyone there in the Philippines, well, enjoy the movie and keep being a Harry Potter fan!

Ginny Unbottled: Bonnie Wright

Hey Bonnie! Have you always been a Harry Potter fan?

Bonnie: Well, I've always read the books with great interest and I would get excited when the next one was coming out.

What is your favorite book in the series so far?

B. I think they are all different, they all get better and better but I really enjoyed the one that just came out, the sixth book. I also really enjoyed the fourth one as well but I like all of them really.

Did you want to play Ginny Weasley or did you think you would have wanted to play another role?

B. No, when I first got the role, for the first film, I really didn't know a lot about the books when I only was just about to read the first book. My brother has read them and he always said that I reminded him of the character Ginny. Then I heard about the film and that was the character I thought I actually would play.

Among all of the movies that you came out in, which movie did you like most but hit?

I think every one thinks different because each one had a different director to bounce them, and that makes each one kinda different. So I kinda enjoyed all of them in kinda different ways. They all have been so fun.

For this movie, with a different director, David Yates, how was your relationship like Elle with working with him compared to the other directors?

B. I really enjoyed working with David Yates. He's a real kind of no action, director. He likes to really grow a real relationship with all his cast and also he wants you to have your personal input into the character and what she is feeling, he or she is feeling, in that particular scene. That was really nice to be really involved in what is happening.

Does it feel a little awkward that you'll be kissing Harry in the movie?

B. Not really, I mean, we all read what will happen in the next one so I think it is not really awkward because it's all really acting so I think we'll see when we come to it.

So how is your relationship with Daniel like in real life? Are you friends?

B. Yeah, definitely! Friends with him and all the rest members and it's nice because we hang around when we are not filming because there's quite a big gap in between the films and it would be a shame if we don't speak to each other until the next film.

Who else in the cast are you close to?

B. We're close to Dan, Rupert, Emma, Katie and Evanna is in there in the later film, James and Oliver, they play my brothers in the film, so definitely we're close.

Do you get stopped on the street? Because now you have a way of blowing reality and hanging in the limelight that you really are Ginny Weasley?

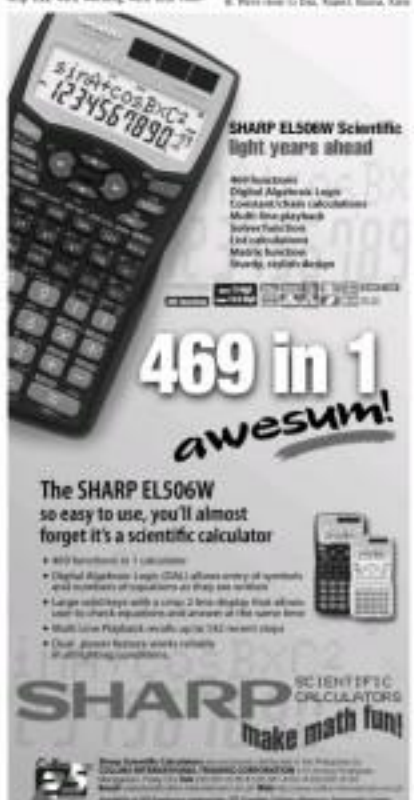
B. Yeah, I think some people can be quite drawn to that thinking that you are Ginny Weasley and that's your character but I think most of the time that it is positive in a way that people really liked you in the film and they kind of treat you as a normal person. I think, also, other interests draw it seeing you on the screen and then seeing you for real. It's kind of weird—seeing us as ourselves than either dressed up in our character's outfits and playing our characters.

Any parting words to the millions of fans out there?

B. I think it is a really, really good film. I've seen it and videos are never flowing it, you could definitely get that kind of feeling that it is very different and much darker. It becomes very controversial and really, energy varied and of dark. And there's 'Voldemort' and Deathlickers', the relationships build a lot in the film. And I think the Ministry of Magic is a really central issue and is frightening when it comes out for.

CLASS STRUGGLE. The Stigma is going is back in "Order of the Phoenix."

BONNIE WRIGHT as Ginny Weasley



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Sweet E-motion

By Tok Dee

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Let them drink cake!

Sometimes, too much is never enough," Ulrik Tamm-son said after what could only be imagined as a helluva good night. Most of only he, along with other self-loved sons like Hemingway and Frank Sinatra lived to today, don't be first in line to step up these cocktail-inspired cupcakes? Make that ingredients, since the original cupcakes inspired by the favorite cocktails on the drink list. Truly sweet are just some things that are good when in a treat. It's real, in fact.

Gabriella and Serena is behind the fun on this one. They've created the classic Margarita, Piña Colada, Tequila Sunrise, Screwdriver, G. Mojito, Blowjob, and Cosmopolitan into sweet and appetizing delicious cupcakes. The Screwdriver G is a bundt down favorite, with vodka, Bailey's Irish cream and Frahlua-flavored icing. Endeavor! For the responsible drivers, don't worry about getting drunk on these delights. The best of liquor will also be taste of your favorite cocktails. You will keep you sober all night long.

It all started out as a late night idea for Dine and Serena Francisco, who's been looking for the one it and is actually an addict of The Greatest Bread. The idea started when they were "sour cream." Not to mention, a cupcake flight pitch fueled by the wood-oil-made power of Manila's cabanatuan. It's the perfect dessert to have at parties and weddings, for it is an new sensation to your... the cupcakes even resemble the cocktails. Yup, the Margarita cupcake even comes with a slice of lime.

Really you have your drink and eat it too. Now this is what you could call a just dessert! For more information and orders, e-mail them at cocktailcupcakes@yahoo.com or call (0917)7972161. (Photos by Ron Reverso; video at Magnet Café, Bonifacio High Street)

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SATURDAY Special

Editor Nestor U. Torre • Assistant Editor Rita F. Avila

"HONEY" young protagonists Jeni Jay Ramos and Jeric Raval have to go through a lot of tragic and bizarre situations in Dennis Marcelo's "Bahay."

Prospects of Cinemalaya entries assessed

By Nestor U. Torre

ON JULY 10, ALL ROADS FOR MORE HIPPY will lead to the CCP where the third Cinemalaya alternative film festival will unveil [until July 29]. Nine digital feature films and 10 short features will be screened, introducing new filmmakers to a growing audience of film lovers who are looking for the range, variety and depth in viewing options that most mainstream movies generally fail to provide.

Which specific movies should you make a beeline for? It all depends on what you're looking for, of course, but given a level playing field in terms of production and aspects of genre, here's a handy guide:

Screenplays

We were among those who chose the finalists in screenplays for production, so we have more than an inkling of what the finished films could shape up to be.

"Kinder" by Jade Castro and Michiko Yamamoto is one case of the outstanding entries we helped narrow other peers to consider for inclusion, because we found it tragically relevant to the lives of millions of young Filipino workers today.

It's about the "end contract" syndrome by which shifty employers employers keep their costs low by hiring young workers for only six months at a time. This abridges their psychological view of life-something terrible, and the child-lying reality fully deserves to be dramatized and exposed on the big screen.

We were also taken by Adolf Alix Jr.'s "Kubli," because it set to "words simple" story of a boy looking for his lost goat in the primitively awesome island group of the Sarones.

We know, of course, that there was a risk that the film's utter simplicity could make the production too lean, but we hoped that Alix was fully aware of this possibility, and knew how to circumvent it.

Treatment

On the plus side, we sensed that, if the film "worked," it could become a great testament, not just to the bittie beauty and power of articulated sincere, but also to the hardy survivors who lived to tell their story.

"Endorsong," by Ronnie Hernandez and Joanna Lim, could be the most inspiring movie in the film fest. It's another intentionally simple tale about a lady who works hard to earn enough money to buy a bicycle only to periodically give away her earnings to scoundrel-friendly people.

The last that child actors pretty much have to "carry" the movie on their frail shoulders could compromise the movie's chances for success. But again, we trust that Cinemalaya execs are savvy enough to avoid this pitfall.

Emilio Abello IV's "Liguez Lilasan" is a big dish and evanescent tale of how lovers, both found and lost, can affect the ebb and flow of people's lives.

Ignacio Salonga's "Pizza" is another story we picked, because it's about some students at the Philippine Science High School in the suburban Metro—and for a big change, it presents Filipino teenagers as brilliant, unlike most local teen flicks that depict them as gyrating idiots.

Potential drawback

The project's possible drawback is its "open theme" format, which is difficult to whip into focused shape, but we hope that Bobbit can pull it off.

Ed Lejano's "Strangulong na Hininga" is another auspicious film with great possibilities. Ketsa Flores' "Still Life" is about a great area overlooked by film's tragic limitations. Dennis Marcelo's "Bahay" is a soothing music drama that plumbs the depths of human sensibility.

As for Jim Librado's "Sibling," it could end up as the festival's sleeper sensation. It crawls into the urban jungle's kind and dangerous underbelly where death is no cheap and casual as life itself, and, for the first time, exposes us the big screen the short and bittersweet lives of teen street gangs.

SOLEMAN Cruz in Dennis Marcelo's "Bahay."

Smooth special effects, self-deprecating humor in Bay's latest actioner

By Mankzel Torre

TERRY'S A MOVIE OUT THERE ABOUT gigantic, alien robots that transform into US schoolers and Camaros and do battle with other gigantic alien robots who transform into jets, tanks and dinosaurs.

If you spent your childhood's Saturday mornings waiting for Optimus Prime to say "Autobots, transform!" the little kid inside you is probably jumping up and down with glee at the prospect of watching Michael Bay's flick.

Clearly, "Transformers" isn't a movie that examines the human condition or anything like that—except maybe it illustrates our fascination with machinery that can be taken apart and put back together again. In the case of the Autobots (the good guys) and the Decepticons (the bad guys), they do something even cooler—they transform into completely different-looking!

"TRANSFORMERS." Photo from AUSTAR

Toys

You can probably see why kids thought they were such great toys when Hasbro first launched the Transformers line back in 1984. Since then, the Transformers have starred in comic books, cartoons and videogames.

The newly released movie isn't the first one, though. There was a cartoon flick back in '86, though it wasn't that big a hit. The Michael Bay-directed live action, CGI-enhanced version, on the other hand, is well on its way toward becoming one—if it isn't already.

In his latest film, Bay, who helmed "Armageddon" and "Pearl Harbor," once more reveals his love for explosions and cool-looking machinery. Thankfully, he doesn't pretend that the movie is about anything else but—cool-looking machinery and explosions!

There are no attempts at exploring a "grand" theme, or at creating an innovative plot. There are robots clashing mercilessly with one another, numerous special effects, things that go boom—and flashes of humor that sometimes pokes fun at the film itself!

Action

Eight-year-old kids—and those who still think of themselves as such—will have a blast with this movie.

Bay delivers on the action, and the robots' CGI transformation processes are super smooth.

The actors play their roles straightforwardly—Shia LaBeouf is engaging as the resident, up-and-coat Sam Witwicky and Megan Fox (as Mikaela Banes) is no frou-frou bimbo.

In the end, even if you notice that, yes, the movie is actually pretty silly, you'll still enjoy it. It's not "There's more than meets the eye," it's "what you see is what you get"—and, sometimes, that's just fine!

ALABAR, AMA DOR AND DE GUZM. Together again after five years.

Gina, Pinky, Angelu reunite in Hong Kong run of 'TVM'

By Rina P. Jacinto

IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS SINCE Gina Alajar, Pinky Amador and Angelu de Leon first graced the Filipino version of Eve Ensler's "The Vagina Monologues." In 2002, the talented trio starred in Rina Navarro-commissioned but play opposite Angel Aquino, Bobbit Pineda and Sheila Francisco, who performed the monologues in English.

Tomorrow, two performances of "TVM in Filipino" will be staged at the Concert Hall of the City Hall in Hong Kong, thanks to Angelu's wife, Congresswoman Liza Maza and company have since added more theatre flavor and genius to their respective monologues.) Happily, the particular "TVM" star remains one of RVC's biggest fans!

Six years after we first Manila staging, the Filipino version a self controversial. Early this year, a top university known for its liberal stand on socio-political issues, finally allowed the play to be performed on its campus—but only at night!

But, the reason why RVC chose to adapt the play in the vernacular was because it wanted to bring the issue of domestic violence and abuse closer to home. The production doesn't merely entertain, it dares women to end the pervasive culture of silence.

converting the "Inter" set.

Previous incarnations of the play in these cosmopolitan cities were patronized mainly by expats, as we were pleased to learn from Gina that tickets to the Hong Kong performances are also moving briskly.

Controversy

At rehearsals, Gina, Pinky and Angelu finally recalled the controversies that surrounded the 2002 staging. One day before opening night, they stayed up till 3 a.m. to rehearse the newly translated monologues. Gina and company have since added more thespic finesse and genius to their respective monologues.) Happily, the particular "TVM" star remains one of RVC's biggest fans!

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THEY WRITE THE SCRIPTS

Gina Marissa Tagasa writes from the heart

By Ronald G. Mangubat

WRITER GINA MARISSA TAGASA PRIDES HER self as one of the youngest practicing screenwriters in the industry.

TAGASA. Wrote her first script at age 12.

Now, how does she do it? She says with humility: "I'm a 'deadline' writer. I thrive on stress. I am most productive this way. Movie Others and the late Yolanda Nadres were my mentors."

Three days, Tagasa's writing schedule is still full. She is the head writer of comedy GMA show like "Love to Singalong," "Bitoy Patrocyo," "Magic Paminta," and "Sabay Kiss ka Tol." "Magic" is still showing in cinemas.

Tagasa reveals that writing for TV soaps isn't all that easy. She outlines that reading her fellow writers' works also helped improve her craft. She admires the work of Ilse Salvador, Bobby Lee, Bing Lao and Jose Bayan. She explains: "Bayan is brilliant writer. Aside among material, Jayo says. I love Bitoy's sensibility. And I love the crisp and witty dialogue of Bing and Jose!"

Through the years, reading, watching movies, interacting with friends...even going to malls—become Tagasa's sources of ideas from which she mines her stories and characters. Whenever she's in a key spell, she goes strolling or watches a boring film, as she can ponder herself up and say, "I can do better than this movie!"

Observation

In Gina's observation, soaps today are more visual compared to the days when she was still a struggling writer. Another lesson that she remembers comes from the late Gina Brocka, who constantly reminded her to write "to express, not to impress." She elaborates, "There's no reason why writer to please their directors. In the process, they lose the heart of the matter!"

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 DIE HARD 4.0	2 TRANSFORMERS	3 DIE HARD 4.0	4 TYANAK			
GLORIETTA 4	1 DIE HARD 4.0	2 TRANSFORMERS	3 DIE HARD 4.0				
GREENBELT 1	4	5 TRANSFORMERS	6 DIE HARD 4.0	7 TRANSFORMERS			
GREENBELT 2	1 TRANSFORMERS	2 DIE HARD 4.0					
GREENBELT 3	1 TRANSFORMERS	2 DIE HARD 4.0					
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	3 DIE HARD 4.0	4 DIE HARD 4.0	5 TRANSFORMERS				
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 DIE HARD 4.0	2 DIE HARD 4.0	3 TRANSFORMERS	4 TRANSFORMERS			
MARKET! MARKET!	1 DIE HARD 4.0	2 TYANAK					
TRINOMA	1 TYANAK	2 TRANSFORMERS	3 TRANSFORMERS	4 DIE HARD 4.0			
	5 TRANSFORMERS	6 DIE HARD 4.0	7 DIE HARD 4.0				

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — Activity Schedule — July 7, 2007

Greenbelt — The Fashion Rain clip to TFN, dine over from participating Greenbelt 3 & 4 stores — July 1 to 15, 2007

Alabang Town Center — Interactive Broadway & Rachel Ann the Live! — July 7, 2007

Ayala Center Cebu — Air Guitar Fiesta — July 1 to 15, 2007

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Glorietta Greenbelt

Barbara Perez makes auspicious comeback in Fernandez's 'Gulong'

PEREZ and de Veyra in a sequence from the 2007 Cinemalaya entry

By Edward L. Sioco

AFTER A FOUR-YEAR ABSENCE FROM the silver limelight, Barbara Perez is back on the big screen—but with a difference. The actress' comeback vehicle is movie-scene, "Gulong," one of nine finalists in the 2007 Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival.

Initially, the veteran actress didn't want to accept the assignment. "I don't do that kind of indie films," she confesses. "I was worried about the technical limitations of digital filmmaking. I still prefer the old way of making films." However, she changed her mind when she read the script written by Jeanne Jaime. "She made me cry (Yes, hindi ko siya (he said) pinaiyak)."

Noche Fernandez, a seasoned director of TV commercials, had first sought out Barbara's daughter, who showed a requested absence in advertising. It was she who convinced her mother that she would be in good hands. That clinched it for Barbara.

Obsessive-compulsive

Perez, who admits that she's obsessive-compulsive, had only two hours of sleep when she drove to Pila, Laguna for her first shooting day and got there an hour before call time. It took the team to finish her first scene, but that was because Barbara wanted to perfect her sequence with the child actress.

She would take seven minute trips to the provincial location with hubby Robert Arevalo, who's also in the cast. Each time, she would come an hour early, do her own make-up, and rehearse her lines. Last Monday, she watched a preview of "Gulong" and was pleased with how the movie turned out.

In much the same way, she says she did not regret coming for her homecoming role after three way back in 1982. While many look at her today (hints of making it in Hollywood) but yet nowhere despite their best efforts, agency were knocking at her door to sign her for a Tinseltown. This, after she came out in the movie, "Brotherhood in Blood," with Jeffrey Hickey.

Barbara, who was then in contract star of Sampaguita Pictures, was chosen by 20 producers to appear in the Hollywood movie shot in the Philippines. When the film was completed, Barbara was invited to the US to go on to the project. "Ha nihon short shot," she recalls. "Two sitting little girl. Ipit scene!"

She was billed as the producer's mistress, who it was once owned by the legendary Gloria Sevilla. Ironically, she would be billed by a car mistress, a well-known headliner and talented model, when she would be photographed for publicity purposes. Films she remained the point, she could be cooperative how this she looked in some of the shots. She couldn't let that accompanies. How would she cooperate her for the bodies of other actresses. That only they were already destroying photographs!

Movie fan

Barbara's son is big movie fan, and she was thrilled to sit across Sandra Bullock and Nora Aunor in the make-up room. Next, she was hemorrhaged in the commentary when she was approached by Cary Grant, who asked if he could join her. She got so rattled that she started to smoke. The actor declared him "You shouldn't be smoking!"

After the premiere of her movie, a film executive offered her a role in another movie. She would play a Mexican girl who has to work in a brothel with her to earn a living. When she learned that the role called for her to wear some revealing costumes and undergo nudity, she turned it down. The executive, however, told her that if she requested to work in Hollywood, she would have to deal with similar situations.

Barbara is reluctant to stress the of nudism. "If roles would be limited. I would have to compromise on how I dress even. How could I compete with Nancy Kwan, who could dance? I didn't dance," she explains. There was another promising reason why she was leaving second thoughts about signing a Hollywood contract. "Robert (Arevalo) was pestering me to start (his). So I decided I might as well go for a lifetime contract!" So, Barbara left Hollywood to resume her career in the Philippines and become like Robert Arevalo.

In his time, Joy connect with Sampaguita Sampaguita and the decades because as to disembark unions. Barbara even the able to work with Fernando Poe Jr. and Joseph Estrada.

Two icons

What was it like working with the two icons? "They were both very magnificent. Nung nakakasabay kayo (kumpleto si Nora Aunor) sa pagpapalit ng costume, kayo nga naga-palit din. At FPJ naman, nakakatakot siya sa Shimoshima. 'Hoy ang ka-ar-ne magbalot ng tsokolate!'"

She remembers her first day of shooting with FPJ. She was dressed in a bar in "Ito Ilan Ang Aking Ina," and she was nervous about working with the actor-turning. "Si Ronnie, nakapasa sa dolly, talagang pinahirapan niya ako. At last, nagkausap kayo sa Tagalog. Akala ko, Hindi siya marunong magsalita ng Tagalog!"

It's interesting to note that Barbara has worked with her husband in only one movie, before "Gulong." This was the acclaimed "Tinagalog ng Ilan Ang" (1980), which was directed by Mario Cal. Before they got married, and the audience experienced into a passionate kissing scene!

In "Gulong," Barbara and Robert play a couple whose love is rekindled after many years by a child's quest for a bicycle. Also in the cast are Gary Valenciano, Gladys Reyes, Ina Feliciano, Lou Veloso, Odette Khan, Tricia Aquino-Aunard, Mitch D'Asercio, and child actors Simon Ibarra, Jorge Goncordia, Jared Medina and Ignacio Flores.

"Gulong" will have a gala screening on July 22 at 12:45 p.m. at the CCP Main Theater.

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Shangri-la Plaza

Remembering the legacy of Hermogenes Ylagan

By Rolen Cervantes

HERMOGENES YLAGAN II OF-ten refers to his cultural heroes as an the "fathers of Philippine Zarzuela." The classical form became popular in the country after it was imported from Spain via Mexico.

His long after a was produced zarzuela composer Rosendo Salvador the master. In Iloilo, a beautiful sound. Luntiano ordered a score for himself among the Ilonggos. Cultural centers like Pampanga, Bicol and Bulacan likewise had thriving performing groups that staged shows during religious and national holidays. There came along Dr. Ian Hosain, Philippine musicologist, first vice-president.

ILAGAN. Accomplished actor.

GIRON. Distinguished music.

Most active

One of Manila's theater troupes was led by Hermogenes Ylagan. Since he was most active at the start of the 20th century, the dramatist-actor-musician had to contend with the copyright issues.

His talented children were quickly moved for the next musicians to capture the moviegoing audience, since they possessed good looks and musical talent, and were educated.

However, even if Mr. Ylagan came was highly esteemed among local performing artists, he was often to see other professional members to establish their own standard identity.

A doctor son drove the professional name forward. Dr. Ylagan, whose specialization is Ophthalmology, was also an expert editor.

Gerry's daughter Liberty Ilagan, a Ms Bicolandia titleholder, among the younger females of Sampaguita during its Golden Years in Bicol. Ms. Jessa Gibbs is Liberty's nephew and the son of Rosendo Valdez.

Gerry's brother, Angel Esmeralda, became one of the most popular matinee idols of the 50s.

Angel's son, Joy Ilagan, by previous, Congress like this, is still connected behind as an excellent thespian.

The Ilaw-ins turned to making music. Chhimamihol, Nanunulo'y, for the movies. His son, Bobot!, himself an acclaimed actor and film-directing minister is active to this day.

Striking omissions in best actors list

By Rocco U. Torre

FIFTEEN MALE THESPIANS HAVE BEEN CITED by a 100-member panel as the best Filipino actors of all time, and we've been asked to react to the choices.

Well, let's see. The 15 best actors are Fernando Poe Jr., Dindo Fernando, Joy Ilagan, Eddie Garcia, Christopher de Leon, Jaja Mahusay, Eddie Gutierrez, Phillip Salvador, Richard Gomez, Piolo Pascual, Johnny Delgado, Rhoda Mendoza, Pinky Pascual, Johnny Delgado, Richard Gomez, Mark Gil and Rudy Fernandez.

First off, they should be cited as the panel's choices as the best 15 actors of all time.

Truth to tell, we have had stage actors who've done some better things, work than some of the 15 names in the list.

Some actors landing the scope to movie actors, however, the list just definitive. There are some names who shouldn't be on it, and other worthy greats who aren't on the list.

Comments

Let's discuss our comments on the film actors who should be on the list. Very definitely, Rubirosa Bautista deserves to be cited as one of the best. In an impressively wide range of movie roles, he created unrivaled characters of great credibility and emotive power.

Tony Ilanan Jr. is another celebrity "should include." As his lead roles in film classics like "Bituin ng Lupa," "Anak Dalita" and "Badjao" proved, he was easily credible and empathetic in "emotional" roles that contrasted radically with his "gwapo" roles. Just asked Boy Palma (movie-tv industry's top system from the '50s to the '60s.

In the comic vein, how could we possibly leave out Jose Padilla Jr., who was known for his larger-than-life portrayals in movies like "Kuwit sa Gabing Madaya?"

Then for Vic de Leon, who delivered powerful performances in "Roberta," "Tagos sa Bato," and "Kumander." He was the finest love story triple twice, and even in supporting characters roles, he stood out because of his talents and rare realism of his performances.

Let's not forget Fausto Magdaraog, whose compelling performances in "Hostages to Hatred" and "Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos" are unforgettable. He was also cited by some 20 critics for his gritty portrayal of tortured Korean pilot in a Hollywood film.

Similarly an outstanding thespian was Vic Diego, whose versatility in the course of a long and varied career was impressive to behold. From action films to art comedies, he could do them all to a fine tune!

We must also mention Rodolfo Vallez, whose savvy depth and range is exceptional. Some people may dismiss him as "just" a character or action actor, but he's really much more than that. Aside from his dramatic roles, we admire his lively witty guy characterizations on film, which benefit from his exquisite sense of comic timing.

It really is too bad that all that talent is being put to use mostly in undistinguished comics roles on TV. Another choice, Vallez can't be only comic and Ilonggo who's being taken for granted by the entertainment industry. Once does!

In addition, we must also cite the power and versatility in the film roles executed by Manuel Conde, Oscar Keyser, Tommy Abad, Leopoldo Salcedo, Paul Hubo, Mario Dewa and Nonoy Buenaventura.

So, who didn't some of them get on the list of 15 best film actors? Partly because many of their movies are no longer available for viewing and reviewing. There's a big tragedy that we cannot see our great actors in great roles.

Instead of "coming up with lists, therefore, and our international cue energies on helping improve the miserable film archiving and preservation system of the Filipino movie industry.

What good are great actors if their work can no longer move, benefit, and inspire succeeding generations of filmlovers?

FROM TOP: BUSTIA, ABUAS, AND VALDEZ. Exceptional depth and range.

The other side of Mark Jimenez

MARK CREEPS IS HERE POPULARLY known as Mark Jiménez, a former congressman and high-powered businessman. But, up close, the beleaguered father and husband, whose ex-boss faces trading a lot about, isn't so bad, after all.

He has an intelligence quotient of 186, in the figure of the three groups of media women chatted with MJ. He talked with candid down-and charm.

Spirituality

MJ said he found God when he was at least 40 years old. For many years, he entertained as a spectator in a church in Paris, where he grew up. He spiritual, he has brought him to the present status to spouse Josephine Jiménez, and his kids, baptisms, and he has its own move to all media.

He says he found peace while serving his prison term in Allenwood, Pennsylvania.

Upon release, MJ came home to Manila and visited the Monastery of Transfiguration in Bukidnon, Batasan. Thereafter, he embarked on a long journey to help people who are in need.

He has spent over P700 million of his own money to distribute relief goods, food, medicine, construction materials, vitamins, Divine Mercy posters, and Rosaries assistance to impoverished communities in Manila, Laguna, Ifugao, Bukidnon, Palawan, Cebu and Davao. No politics was involved!

JIMENEZ. Found peace in prison.

E-mail mandyaraneta@yahoo.com or call 8691767.

STREET SMART

Mandy Aranaeta

A leader worth emulating

ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A WOMEN-ful king who was wise and full of good qualities in his endowments; he was praised by the people. But he did not readily accept their compliments.

Being mostly reserved, he felt it was inappropriate that great attributes were heaped upon him even before those qualities became manifest. He did not want his followers to have too many expectations of him, and regarded their effusive praise as too much.

The king declared, "If I gather followers of low character, only after the qualities you have spoken about have already manifested themselves in me."

Action

"A foolish person who accepts offices or ranks does not know that it only serves to invite him: a person with honor and responsibility doesn't like boasting about his abominable actions."

Followers who were also prophets, counselors to speak of the king's future work: "Just to the one god evacuation scares for eight months and returns it back to earth in the form of rain, the king collects tax from his subjects and secures it to these seasons of need."

This statement explains the art of his exercise for the people's well-being. It shouldn't be

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bautista

used for the personal gratification of government officials.

The king's followers added: "He will remain mindful regarding matters of pleasure and exhilaration. He'll be like an—the life force within the body—which is exhibited internally and externally."

Punishment

"Since the king remains as the particle of piety, he will be meant to both his son and the son of his enemy. If the enemy doesn't deserve punishment, he won't punish him. But, if his son was made to be punished, he will immediately give him the punishments he deserves. Because of this, his subjects will derive great satisfaction in accepting him as their ruler."

We should use the king's qualities in our government officials—they should be humble, honest and modest.

SATURDAY Special

TRAVOLTA (LEFT). Plays a woman in "Hairspray." As right is great but Nikki Blonsky, who portrays his character's daughter.

John Travolta on the joys and 'hazards' of being a woman

LOS ANGELES—"Everybody tried to grope me all day!"

That was how a smiling John Travolta described his close to a woman—with "big breasts, big ass, and a little tinier like Sophia Loren—if the gained 200 pounds"—on the set of the musical comedy "Hairspray."

Travolta, who showed up at the premiere minus the body suit, talked about playing Edna Turnblad, the chubby mother from whose daughter, Tracy, lands a spot on a TV dance show. There, she wins the heart of a throwback and manages to break racial segregation by the iconic subversion of the hit Broadway musical.

"Men and women wanted to feel my breasts and bum," John shared. The actor has always been a genial interview subject, but more so on the afternoon of the press event, when the main topic was about him playing a wife for Christopher Walken's and another for Nikki Blonsky, a great find). Reporters laughed through most of the interview.

THE ACTOR poses with ex-Christopher Walken.

'It took a lot of grease to get me back in a musical'

Attraction

"Women said how were the sensations of the fat suit," the 53-year-old star continued. "I thought 'But they know that I'm under here!' I stood for a day because I didn't want. I would say, fill right, go ahead!"

He witnessed John's transformation from a successful Beantown assistant when we visited the "Hairspray" set in Toronto late last year. The actor talked to us late in a popular shadow. Then, around hour long, he emerged in a dazzling red and gold muscular the film's finale.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Reuters V. Nejmeh

When we watched the finished product in LA last month, we remembered the details of shooting that final sequence, when the cynics of "Miss Teenage Hairspray" was announced in an "Interview Randomed" style TV show. The appearance of cast and crew of Christopher's hat take Ordet had to stay because he had several more scenes to do), Queen Latifah, watching on the sidelines, Michelle Pfeiffer, who has not done a movie in years, declaring that it felt good to be back in a studio, and seeing the spunk and charm of Nikki.

Preachers

John discussed what preachers can do. "Women and their shape equally poses. 'Run' me (laughs)! But you will take a room as a man and not get a reaction. But, you come in as a woman, you get a lot! Men were flirting with me! On the set, I was being given power that I never had before. People had tantrums in front of me. It was fascinating!"

Since he himself had been subjected to criticism about his gained weight in the past, John were asked about body image and people's obsession with it.

"I've never been particularly judgmental over people's bodies—thin or 'heavy' he replied. "I never wanted to be, as others I'm criticized, I take it with a grain of salt. I had a passion for food, and I didn't care if I gained some for this and lost some for that."

Transvestite

In this role, first played by the late transvestite, Divine, in John Waters' feature film, and then by Harvey Fierstein (he which he won a Tony) and Bruce Vilanch in the Broadway musical inspired by that movie, John recalled, "When I was asked to do it, I said, 'Yes,' I was a leading man for 32 years. Why me? What have I done to convince you (the director, Adam Shankman, and producers, Craig Zadan and Neil Meron) that I would be the perfect woman?"

"I won't play gay. I said, 'If you let me play a woman, I will do this. If you want to do jokes about Pascal—it's a man playing a woman, it's not so interesting to me.' Where they allowed me to make her curvaceous, soften her features, and not be mean-like, I got more comfortable doing it. Otherwise, I would be sleeping with a transvestite!"

John's determination also decided it for John. "It was his vision and passion that convinced me," the actor revealed. "He said to me, 'I will take this movie personally and if it doesn't come out right, I'm going to do it.' I thought, 'Isn't' I thought, 'I have to go with this guy! He was passionate about the material. It was important to me that the movie doesn't suck' and every Broadway fan will. I was to the biggest musical film in history (Warner's). To get me back in a musical, and to get me back into Chicago, just—anyone else, you—it took a lot of grease (laughter)!"

Magical moment

A scene showing Nikki and Travolta singing and dancing to Ike Ford Astaire and the singer Rogers is worth the price of a movie ticket. John's eyes lit up whenever the scene came when he discussed this magical moment. "Chris and I are old buddies from Broadway. We have our history of summer theater

Only in Hollywood

Reuters V. Nejmeh

Broadway and off-Broadway. We were comfortable together being musical performers. When Chris decided that he was playing his character as a husband who was from about me, that we have a wife (with daughter) I said, 'Okay.'

"It was important for me to be coy, feminine, and flirtatious with him. If he weren't crazy about me as a woman who's out 50, it wouldn't work. (Chris was pivotal in giving me something I could relate to."

A question on relatives he had a hard time adjusting as a woman being led by Christopher while dancing led to memories of his parents in the White House that was much photographed. It's one of the iconic images in Travolta's life.

Footage

"To be honest, I did have to ad. just to bring it," he began. "I remembered 10 times Dana Bennett (here was footage of her leading Prince Charles. I would see her lead him. So, when I danced with her at the White House, I remember gently forcing her side down, looking at her in the eye and saying, 'We're good.' When I tried to dominate Chris, I realized, 'Okay, now, it's Princess Diana and he's John Travolta—I better let him lead. The weirdest whole was interesting.

"Dancing with Princess Diana was an amazing moment for her and for me, because I was then starting a dip to my camera—no one was interested in me! After that, I was robotic. I stammered to people again. I was again on the cover of newspapers and magazines!"

He disclosed that the dance sequence with Christopher was heavily rehearsed. "When it was just my own body and clothes, it was hard work," John explained. "But, it was fun and challenging when I put the body suit on. The trick was, to look lighter than I was. I didn't want to worry the moviegoers by moving heavily.

Body suit

"I wanted to be light on my feet, since this was a musical comedy. But naturally, the body suit was right on my body, as if I moved my hips, even though they were large, they moved at the same time. If there had been a lag or separation, it wouldn't have worked."

"As a child, I had the advantage of watching some of the best female performers on stage in New York. In my memory I know how to make women stop get from masculine to feminine. Sometimes, it is solved arching a wrist or leaning your hips."

This is a story John likes to tell. "When I was a kid, I emulated my mother struggle to put on girdles, bras and work legs. She would walk in high heels for hours. I thought, well, there must be some level of discomfort there, but when she put it all together, she looked pretty good.

"But, when I had to do it myself, it was exhausting! I would be out of breath trying to put the girdle and stockings on. I said, where have I seen this before? Oh, my mother (laughter)!"

Parental approval

Since a central story element in "Hairspray" involves the teenage characters seeking parental approval to follow their dreams, John was asked when he knew he had his own and dad's blessings to pursue whatever he wanted to do.

"When I took out the garbage and my mother thought I was 'being domestic genius,' he chimed in hysterical laughter from the journalists. "I know that they believed in me (seriously)!"

The father of Ella, 7, an aspiring actress, and Jett, 15, with wife Kelly Preston elaborated. "I sang and danced for my family every day—that was my job! They believed in me, as I did perfectly for their ethos. I pitched stones and lip-synched to records. They were forced to watch me! I had parental support early on. I was really at age 7."

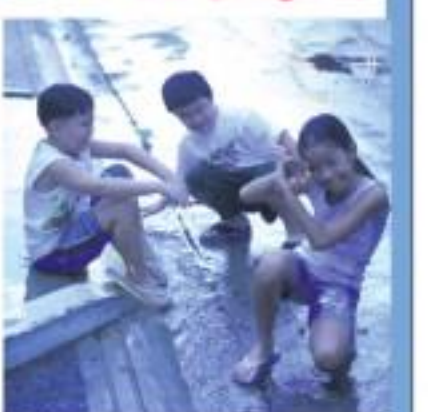
So, how does one take out the trash and his husband a non-gay-ness? He quipped: "I probably did it with dance movements!"

Email at rsquino [at] inquirer.com.ph, and read his blog, "The Popular Report," on www.inquirer.net/specialreports/popularreport

Over 70 rat-borne diseases identified to date:

Would you risk the plague?

RATS carry many potentially life threatening diseases such as Murine Typhus, Dysentery, Salmonella, Bubonic Plague and Rabies. A staggering 3.6 million rats are estimated to be born each day. Each one is a potential carrier or vector for one or more of the 70 known rat borne diseases identified so far. This jeopardizes our health and should be considered a serious threat.



One such disease, Leptospirosis, occurs when leptospira bacteria from rat urine and feces enters our system. Typically, this happens when contaminated water comes into contact with the mucous eyes, mouths and abrasions on our skin. It causes a wide range of symptoms which can easily be misdiagnosed. If left untreated, it can lead to kidney damage, meningitis, liver failure, and respiratory distress. In rare cases, death occurs.

Protect family and home with the Rentokil Rodent Control System from Bayer. Each Rentokil product contains Coumatetralyl which slowly kills rats so they won't develop "bait shyness" or associate it with danger.

Use Rentokil Tracking Powder, which is effective at bait and also doubles as a tracking powder to help identify where rats dwell. Dual-acting as well as rats will handle two Rentokil Ready-Made Bait mash from fragments on which cereal-loving rodents feed immediately. And for utmost convenience, Rentokil Pasta is easy to use sachets can be placed wherever and whenever you suspect rats threaten your home.

Bayer Environmental Science

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PIONEER

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3 TRANSFORMERS
4 TRANSFORMERS

STA. ROSA

1 DIE HARD 4
2 DIE HARD 4
3 TYANAKS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
5 TRANSFORMERS

LIPA

1 DIE HARD 4
2 DIE HARD 4
3 THE INVISIBLE
4 TYANAKS
5 TRANSFORMERS

DASMARIÑAS

1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 DIE HARD 4
4 DIE HARD 4
5 TYANAKS

IMUS

1 DIE HARD 4
2 DIE HARD 4
3 NEXT
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 TYANAKS
6 FANTASTIC FOUR

ANGELES

1 DIE HARD 4
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 TYANAKS
4 DIE HARD 4

TARLAC

1 OCEAN'S 13
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 TRANSFORMERS

STARMILLS

1 TRANSFORMERS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 TYANAKS
5 DIE HARD 4
6 DIE HARD 4

BACOLOD

1 DIE HARD 4
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 DIE HARD 4
4 RESERVE
5 THE INVISIBLE
6 TYANAKS

ILOILO

1 DIE HARD 4
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 DIE HARD 4
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 TYANAKS
6 THE INVISIBLE

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OPENS JULY 11

Religious programming needs to be energized

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR YEARS now we've been urging Catholic leaders to increase their use of media to spread the Good Word. Today, however, efforts in this direction have been piecemeal at best, indicating that the Church in the Philippines doesn't adequately appreciate the exponential value of the use of media in mass evangelism.

Talking to different Catholic groups, we sense a disease of media. Some "spiritual" people apparently believe that the media, especially TV and film, are "dirty" so good souls shouldn't have anything to do with them.

This is so wrong. The media aren't anything one way or the other; they're there to be used by people—bad or good—for their own objective or subjective ends.

Fear

So, let's get over our fear of the media and use them for good, OK?

One of the reasons why "good" people mistrust the media is ignorance. Some priests used to merely delivering sermons in church don't know much about media's multifarious communication skills and processes, so they dismiss it as too newfangled to be taken seriously by "spiritual" people.

Wrong again. The Holy Spirit long ago arrived at its mother in the form of media's supposedly cold and scientific communicative power, so erupting and oozing-dulling about it is really a waste of time. The wise Catholics understand and embrace this media, the better.

The use of media in evangelization should be made a strong part of religious formation in seminaries and novitiates. Parish workers should similarly be educated about its skills and powers.

Media techniques can be learned—should be, women. As it is, Catholics have been left way behind by the Evangelicals in the use of radio and television, and they should never fail to bridge the media gap if they want to remain competitive at all.

These thoughts come to mind because, last month, Shalom Tidings started a multi-awarded television journalist in Kara David and us to Pampanga, to talk on the use of media to the new TV studios of the Catholic pro-charismatic group whose weekly religious show, "Stars of Light," has gotten rave reviews from cable TV

DIAZ-JALANI. Has trained and guided the Pampanga TV group and its growing pains.

Paris Hilton, free but not forgiven

By Nestor U. Torre

PARIS PARIS HILTON WAS RECENTLY jailed, many people said it was about time, and a several late nights.

When she was released from prison last week, however, some fans opted to take a more sympathetic stance. After all, Paris had paid for her infractions, hadn't she?

The plot thickened after the party bride-to-be Britney was interviewed on TV by Larry King. She even points when she said that her stint in jail had changed her, from an opportunistic, loose-living party girl to a more spiritual and responsible young woman who now wanted to be of help to others. Aparently, she said she would just say a halfway hours for teenagers who, like her, had gotten into legal trouble.

Credibility

In the same interview, however, Paris claimed that she had never taken illegal drugs—and that weakened her credibility in a major way. Simultaneously, other media outlets scrutinized with evidence of her apparent drug-related activities in the past, and several raised a handful pictures.

If she mentioned accordingly, Paris would procrastinate on Michely on this score, how would she rather things she said be taken yet-really? Some fans even finished Larry King for accepting Paris' statements without question.

These and other developments have further complicated Paris' options after her abridged incarceration. Many people expected her to come a new leaf, but even her most constant readers is being held in doubt by some viewers.

Is she really sincere about reforming her life and career, to be of greater service to others? Definitely, the jury is still out on that score.

It's one that her recent, much-publicized run-in with the law has made her a hotter story, but her rescuer will go either way from here on, depending on how she handles her post-prison downtime.

Point of view

Becoming a more responsible, giving celebrity sounds great, but from a practical point of view, it could dampen her career prospects, since entertainers of purpose tend exactly bolls at the box office—at least as far as bottomline digits-watchers like her are concerned.

Take her hit TV show, "A Simple Life." It's premised on her spoof on her own flighty self-scrolling antics across conservative Middle American with her and her partner in crime, Nicole Richie's (rich) and occasionally even bewildered.

If she does turn a new leaf, will she have to give up the "shocking" show, or will it be reformatted into something less controversial and thus less "hot" to view?

In the movies, Paris has generally played clueless, vapid types. If she now wants to project a more responsible image, these roles would have to give way to more complex, challenging and insightful parts.

Big question

The big question is, will earnest stories be enough for her to be able to do justice to these demanding parts? Once again, the answer is a big "It depends..." —Oh what? Well, taken, for one!

Another relevant consideration is, would Paris' fans be at all interested in such an adjustment in her image, or would they prefer to continue seeing her as the silly star they love to hate and make fun of?

So many ifs and buts—and all because Paris hasn't exercised enough that her stay in prison has indeed changed her for the better!

HILTON. "Turning a new leaf isn't going to be easy for she 'hot' heiress.

Religious programming . . .

From page G2

viewers in Central Luzon.

The production group is about to go on free TV and produce other shows, as its prime mover, Bishop Ambo David, was eager to appear in multiple venues and have supporters in terms of media savvy, hence the ongoing series of talks Marilou has lined up.

For years now, she's trained and guided the group past its growing pains, and she's proud of what it's achieved to date. It goes without saying that, despite her current battle with cancer, she continues to work with the group to get it ready for its additional workload this year.

Evangelization

Our session with the production group proved to be an eye-opener in both directions. We sensed that the staffers and supporters are inflated on would see all the changes they could get—and we also learned a lot about why the Pampanga group is doing better than most in making fuller use of media in evangelization.

The training and inspiration provided by Marilou Kay Weiss in the active leadership of media-savvy Bishop Ambo, one of the prime foes of the popular "Idea of Light" program.

While some other Catholic leaders have been sitting on their hands and debating with the usual, he's moved strongly support to get up a new building to house the Pampanga production group's various activities.

The group's ongoing educational process is similarly important, as is the diocese's strong support of its media initiatives. Finally, viewers have a felt need for inspiring and illuminating shows, so "Idea of Light" has become beloved by many people, who keep asking the group to produce more shows.

With such upbeat prospects, shows insiders also expect up for Pampanga's pioneering Catholic broadcasters. Other Catholic groups would do well to appropriate such shows, to learn the ropes and get over their self-defeating discomforts and doubts.

NOW SHOWING

Tragedy and advocacy inspire touching trilogy

By Rito B Asilo

"Paraluman"
D: Jun Lana ("Unmark Mon Ang Laruja")
Joel Torre ("Ang Kapatid Kong si Ebok")
Bicky Davao ("Marie")
Sc: Shaniel Soriano, Cesar Montano, Michael V.

TRUE-TO-LIFE tragedy and selfless advocacy swing together three stories of hope in Conrad Balinga's well-meaning trilogy—with varying degrees of success.

In Lana's "Unmark Mon ang Laruja," Jocelyn Llarenas (Marcel Soriano) manages to convert all four of her children after the December 2003 landslide in Libasi, Leyte leaves them underground. But luck turns to grief when she realizes that help comes too late for her daughter, Grace. The untimely deaths of Grace and Mama, her pregnant younger sister (Jennifer Sevilla), almost drive her to insanity.

Joel Torre's "Ang Kapatid Kong si Ebok" follows the zany misadventures of two boys—Ryan (Elmo Bernabe) and his wok-chewing "adopted" brother, Ebok (Paulleen Bonilla)—after the former's bird-hearted parents, Dr. Didoy and his wife, Didoy (Michael V and Gloria Martin), respectively adopt the latter.

In "Marie," director Bicky Davao makes a heavier case to bring the gut-wrenching story of Rudy Abad to the big screen. Rudy (Coco Martin), who left the Philippines when he was only 17, now has American Dream crumbling when his wife, Marie (Kim Eirish Belleza), dies in the 9/11 terrorist bombings in 2001.

Rudy who just celebrated his 20th wedding anniversary with his wife, is constantly haunted by Marie's friendly cell calls shortly before the ground plane struck the World Trade Center. Along with Marie, some 176 of his friends perish in the tragedy. At the hijacked plane that he just finished—not pictured!

Pride forced recently wrapped up a video and pictorial session to promote Mare's Botanist's new wedding packages, immensely enjoying what could really be a preview of the most exciting day in his life.

Dido was just served with model Joy Bondiwas and played his role as a dashing groom to the bill, artist Asian-Filipino and multitalent floral wedding planner—but we're raving of Arvid by Mare's this season.

The Mare's pictorial is the first time that Dido has posed as a groom for a bridal chic he endorses. The popular Filipino-owned has 103 branches in the Philippines and five in the United States.

'Pobreng Alindahaw'

The CCPO Pepot Lobbet stages a Severin Teodoro's drama play, "Pobreng Alindahaw" at 3 and 8 p.m. today and 3 p.m. tomorrow. The allegory tours like a folktale for children but the issues raised by two desperadoes and a battered wife the comic fantasy into a serious look in to potentially freshest's "Bapdu".

FILLION. Portrays a man who goes through a near-death experience in "White Noise: The Light."

will also have its final performances tomorrow at 6 p.m.

'Lisiang Bilog ng Caucasus'

Today and on July 11-14 and 18-21, Tanghalang Aurora stages "Lisiang Bilog ng Caucasus," a version of Bertolt Brecht's "The Caucasian Chalk Circle," which explores the themes of justice and morality. Call 426-6051 loc. 5103.

At Metropolis Star Alabang

Today at Pangkalahayan workshop, Tomorrow, Salsalo Boss mall tour. July 15, Pinoy Pop Superstar mall tour. July 21, Sun Bradwinds workshop. July 22, Bap Connect. July 28, Inter-Intramall Mall Tour. Fourteen. July 29, Hunks Bash performs.

KKK exhibit

The KKK exhibit of photographs by Keller, Kawayan and Kalaw now at Gallery Mabini (tel. 09 05-4042) has been extended to July 14. Hallie Tolentak will screen his film, "Who Invented the Yayo? Who Invented the Moon Buggy?" at 6 p.m. on July 14.

Mall tours, musical events

Jed Madela promotes his "Only Human" album at 5 p.m. tomorrow at SM Megamall.

Pretty boys of Edgar sings sets from his "Medyo Medley" album at 6 p.m. tomorrow at SM Bicutan.

Orange & Lemons promotes its "Bituin sa Gabi" album today at SM Megamall.

Celebrity hosts to first anniversary party and Gallaticos Grand Eve Ball at 7 p.m. today at the Eastwood Central Plaza.

Mark Bautista performs at SM Lucena today and at SM Batangas on July 29. He's also in Yanah Gervasio's Aurora Collasoy concert on July 14.

New singing star Mike Hako will launch her debut album on KMR-TV homeless show, "HOK" tomorrow.

Marc Nelson for Kenny Rogers Roasters

Marc Nelson is the image model and endorser of Kenny Rogers Roasters. He loves hanging out at some of Kenny's 30 branches, or calling for delivery.

He appreciates the fact that Kenny has the convenience of fast food but is full of freshly prepared and healthy choices, like Kenny's Famous Roast Chicken, its full array of delicious grilled offerings, Roast Chicken Sandwich—and all those yummy Pastas!

NELSON (seated, left) signs contract with Kenny Rogers Roasters' Executive Vp (seated, right), Atty. Jorge Calixto (standing, left) and Karen Castro.

Lessons learned in the spectral world

IN ENFORCE LUMIERES NEW thriller, "White Noise: The Light," Abe (Jake Dhalhan Wilson) watches helplessly as his wife and son are killed. He fails to deal with his inability to save them—and commits suicide. He travels through a tunnel of white light and sees his wife and son before coming to him—but she cannot manage to save his life!

However, it turns out that he's changed in a key way. He can see into the spectral world and tell other people are going to die.

Eventually he tracks down his loved ones' killer—and learns a terrifying truth. And, in his never more people from death, Abe discovers that there's a terrible price to pay for interfering with fate. How far will he go to save another or someone daughter and restore the natural order of the world?

Concert at the Park

At 5 p.m. on July 8, Concert at the Park presents the Transitory twins band in a program titled "Pinoy Ska." "Ska" combines the elements of Caribbean "mento" and Calypso with American jazz and/or ballet and blues.

Movies on TV

On TBA1 today at 6:30 p.m., "Ed TV." Tomorrow at 9 p.m., "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire." July 9 at 10:45 p.m., "The Departed." July 10 at 8 a.m., "The Evening Star." July 11 at 7 p.m., "Meet the Fockers." July 12 at 11 noon, "Spymate." July 13 at 3:30 p.m., "Rumor the Hound of Ada."

On Cinemax today at 1 p.m., "The Two Jakes." Tomorrow at 2 p.m., "The Ideal Assassin." July 9 at 10 p.m., "Double Jeopardy." July 10 at 5:15 p.m., "To Be the Best." July 11 at 3 p.m., "The 36 Commandments." July 12 at 9 p.m., "Donor Unknown." July 13 at 6 a.m., "Brothers in Affinity."

Pride takes a bride

The most eligible bachelor in Philippine show biz just got hitched—not pictured!

Pride forced recently wrapped up a video and pictorial session to promote Mare's Botanist's new wedding packages, immensely enjoying what could really be a preview of the most exciting day in his life.

Dido was just served with model Joy Bondiwas and played his role as a dashing groom to the bill, artist Asian-Filipino and multitalent floral wedding planner—but we're raving of Arvid by Mare's this season.

The Mare's pictorial is the first time that Dido has posed as a groom for a bridal chic he endorses. The popular Filipino-owned has 103 branches in the Philippines and five in the United States.

MONTAGE

PASCUAL (RIGHT). Plays groom to model Joy Hendrickson in preview Mare's wedding theme.